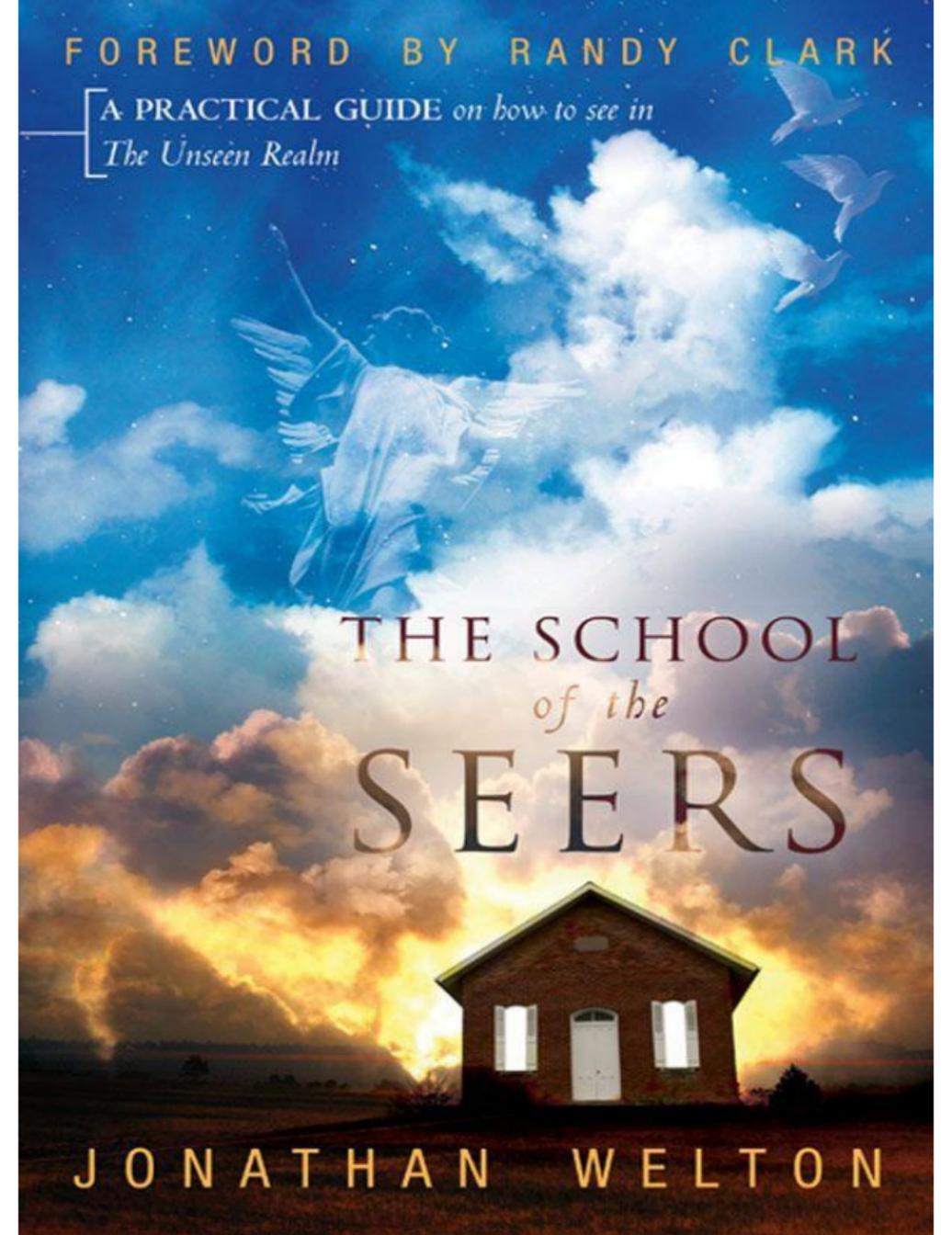


FOREWORD BY RANDY CLARK

A PRACTICAL GUIDE *on how to see in*
The Unseen Realm



THE SCHOOL
of the
SEERS

JONATHAN WELTON

THE SCHOOL
of the
SEERS

A PRACTICAL GUIDE
on how to see in The Unseen Realm

JONATHAN WELTON

All rights reserved. This book is protected by the copyright laws of the United States of America This book may not be copied or reprinted for commercial gain or profit. The use of short quotations or occasional page copying for personal or group study is permitted and encouraged. Permission will be granted upon request. Unless otherwise identified, Scripture quotations are taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®, Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved. Scripture quotations marked NKJV are taken from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All emphasis is authors own. All rights reserved. Scripture quotations marked KJV are taken from the King James Version. Please note that Destiny Image's publishing style capitalizes certain pronouns in Scripture that refer to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and may differ from some publishers' styles. Take note that the name satan and related names are not capitalized. We choose not to acknowledge him, even to the point of violating grammatical rules.

DESTINY IMAGE® PUBLISHERS, INC.

P.O. Box 310, Shippensburg, PA 17257-0310

“Speaking to the Purposes of God for This Generation and for the Generations to Come.”

This book and all other Destiny Image, Revival Press, MercyPlace, Fresh Bread, Destiny Image Fiction, and Treasure House books are available at Christian bookstores and distributors worldwide.

For a U.S. bookstore nearest you, call **1-800-722-6774**.

For more information on foreign distributors, call **717-532-3040**.

Reach us on the Internet: www.destinyimage.com.

ISBN 10: 0-7684-3101-8

ISBN 13: 978-0-7684-3101-8

For Worldwide Distribution, Printed in the U.S.A.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 / 13 12 11 10 09

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I WOULD LIKE TO START by saying thank you to my wife, Karen, the most important person in my life. You have been the most profound representation of Jesus I have ever known. Your walk of love, humility, forgiveness, gentleness, and faith challenge me daily. You are the biggest sign in my life that there is a God, because I can see Him in your heart daily. I thank the Lord for such a perfect match for my strengths and weaknesses. The trust that you have in my ability to hear from God causes me to walk in a deeper level of the fear of the Lord.

I would like to honor my parents, Jim and Carolyn Welton. I am so thankful for having parents who are the most humble, affectionate, gentle, kind, and compassionate lovers of God that I have ever seen. I love you both so much.

I would like to acknowledge the following people (in no particular order) who have encouraged me and made me the man I am today: Tay and Ruthie Williams, Mark and Adam Young, my siblings, my in-laws, Ben and Chrystal Valence, my two editors Kathy Welch and Sandy Holladay. Toby Wolf, Dan Wampler, Brian Stebick, Andrew Russo, Caleb and Emily Mabry, the Erich family, Elissa Harvill, Jim and Tom

Lake, Dorothy Ross, Jaci Frattare, Josh Amberson, David Gardiner, Sam Richbart, Dave and Holly Kluge, Jeff Babajitis, Joanna Hagan, Stephen Ruskino, Paul Scota, Matt and Julie Stutzman, and the staff of Camp Hickory Hill (1998-2004). I love you all.

I would like to say thank you to the following heroes in the Body of Christ; you have been a tremendous example and influence in my life: Randy Clark,

Harold Eberle, Patricia King, Dennis Cramer, Cheryl Schang, Watchman Nee, Kris Vallotton, Bill Johnson, Heidi Baker, Gary Oates, Davi Silva, Joe McIntyre, Tommy Tenney, John Shoemaker, Bob Sorge, Leif Hetland, and Lance Wallnau.

ENDORSEMENTS

The seer anointing is a current invitation from God for the Church in this hour. It is time for us, like Jesus, to see what our Father in Heaven is doing, and do it! Jon Welton has studied this subject and moved in this realm for many years. In *The School of the Seers*, he shares insight from the Word of God that will help you grab hold of this anointing.

—Patricia King
Extreme Prophetic

Jonathan Welton is brilliant. When he teaches, you remember what he has said. God's Spirit is upon him, and the anointing he carries will impact your life.

—Harold R. Eberle
Founder, Worldcast Ministries

We are constantly surrounded by the unseen realm of spiritual forces both good and bad. In his work, *The School of the Seers*, Jonathan Welton reveals valuable insights on how anyone can sharpen his or her own spiritual discernment. By sharing his precious revelations learned through the study of Scripture, church history, and prayer, Jonathan explains to the conventional Christian how to interact with the unseen realm.

—Robert Stearns
Founder/Executive Director, Eagles' Wings Ministries

I have passed on a lot of my gifting and grace to younger men and women in the next generation. Jonathan is one of them. He is prototypical of the prophetic Timothy's that I have been honored and privileged to speak into in many countries. Jonathan is clearly an emerging prophetic gift to the Church. His ability to teach *and* demonstrate the revelatory gifts of the Spirit makes him a true double threat!

—Dennis Cramer
President, Dennis Cramer Ministries

Jonathan Welton's *The School of the Seers* will help you discover that the supernatural can become a normal way of life. In this training manual, Jonathan is speaking from experience, not theory, about the many different aspects of seership. Just as blindness and deafness are serious handicaps in the natural, so are spiritual blindness and deafness in the spirit realm. May you begin to see into the unseen realm as you study this manual.

—Gary Oates
Author, *Open My Eyes, Lord*
International Conference Speaker

I have known Jonathan Welton for years and I appreciate the man, ministry, and message. Jonathan teaches what he knows and

reproduces his anointing in others. This book is an impartation from a man who carries the message and mantle of a seer. You cannot separate between what Jonathan teaches and who he is; this gifting is in his DNA. *The School of the Seers* will open the realm of the invisible so you can do the impossible. This is the gift that will bring the Body of Christ into the supernatural realm. My prayer is, “Open my eyes, Lord, so that I might see!”

—Leif Hetland
Global Mission Awareness

Jonathan’s bookshelves sag under the weight of material that he has read and that he plans to read. He has always “studied to show himself as one approved,” and this has given him an understanding of Scripture that is a true blessing to the prophetic/charismatic movement. He is one of the most unique individuals that I have had the honor of knowing. Even with all his wisdom and anointing he has remained personable and transparent, even outside of the spotlight. I have always known him to be beloved of any pastor who meets him. I highly recommend his teaching to all who are hungry.

—Rev. Jeffery R. Babajtis
Masters of Divinity, Duke Divinity School

I have been asking the Lord to raise up the next generation of theologians and teachers who will articulate a theology of the

Kingdom with signs and wonders to the Body of Christ in the next season. I believe Jonathan Welton is one those new breed of theologians and teachers. He deeply loves the Body of Christ and he carries an anointing for revelation, teaching, and seeing that the Body needs in order to be properly equipped for the days ahead.

—Rev. John S. Baylor Jr.
Masters of Divinity, Fuller Theological Seminary

Jonathan opens the eyes of his readers to the exciting life that is available to those who learn to see the spirit realm. He powerfully unveils Scripture to show how many of the leaders in the Bible were able to see into the spirit realm, commune with God and receive divine direction. Few others have taught that this is possible for us today as Jonathan has in *The School of the Seers*.

—Dr. Art Mathias
President, Wellspring Ministries

Jonathan Welton has a passion for God that overflows into his teaching and ministry. His teaching allows you to view the power of the Holy Spirit through the lens of God's Word in new ways. *The School of the Seers* will challenge and encourage you to change the way you view the world by opening your eyes to the unseen spiritual realm.

—Brian Stebick
Regional Director, CSB Ministries

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword

Preface

Introduction

PART ONE PILLARS

Chapter 1 The Mantle of Fire and Water

Chapter 2 Spiritual Senses

Chapter 3 Impartation

Chapter 4 We Can All See

Chapter 5 Prophets and Seers

Chapter 6 The Unseen Realm

Chapter 7 Questions About the Angelic Realm

PART TWO SPIRITUAL SIGHT

Chapter 8 Discerning of Spirits

Chapter 9 Hindrances to Discernment

Chapter 10 The Force of Love

Chapter 11 Healing Spiritual Blindness

PART THREE UNLOCKING THE GIFT

Chapter 12 Four Keys to Increasing Faith

Chapter 13 Biblical Meditation

Chapter 14 Worship in Spirit and in Truth

Chapter 15 Entrusted With Secrets

Chapter 16 From Glory to Glory

Conclusion

FOREWORD

JONATHAN WELTON'S BOOK, *The School of the Seers: A Practical Guide on how to see in the Unseen Realm*, is a helpful study for anyone desiring to grow in the prophetic/seer realm. I believe Jonathan is one of the next generation of prophetic ministers. He is well-read, has a great spirit based in love and grace, walks in humility, and has pursued training and advanced degrees in his pursuit of excellence in his gifting and calling.

Jonathan not only writes about the subject, he also models what he teaches by ministering in churches and conferences in the gifts he has written about. I believe Jonathan has learned a lot about character and integrity through healthy role models that began in his home. He comes from a solid family with healthy relationships. He has watched his parents move in prophecy in church and in their ministry. This is such a great foundation to build upon, and it serves him well in his writing, teaching, and prophetic ministry.

Jonathan is one of the young men I have had the privilege of speaking into and have watched him grow rapidly in his pursuit of God and His purposes. I am excited about him and other young prophetic ministers who are arising in this generation. I believe they will go higher, dig deeper in the Word, and experience more at

a younger age than many of the past generations. I believe there is a degree of revelatory teaching coming from this generation that will cause us to see truth that we have missed in the past. I have often echoed what my friend Pastor Bill Johnson has so often said: “Our ceiling is the next generation’s floor!”

I am excited to welcome to the public Jonathan’s book, *The School of the Seers*. I know that power to work miracles is dependent on revelation from Heaven. The clearer the revelation, the more faith it creates, and the greater the faith, the more powerful the miracle or the healing. Seeing is a biblical concept and principle. Seeing on the part of God’s people continued in the history of the Church. Seeing is important for the Church today. What Jonathan has done is write a book that helps us “see” what is in the Bible, and from that truth discover the right of believers to “see” into the unseen realm.

Evangelist Randy Clark
Global Awakening Ministries
Author of *There Is More!*

PREFACE

JONATHAN IS A GIFTED TEACHER and a humble leader. As his wife and best friend, I respect him tremendously for the unique anointing he carries and the compassionate heart he has to see every believer rise to the fullness of his or her destiny. His influence in my life and the lives of many of our friends has changed us forever. I still encounter people thanking Jonathan for the profound impact his encouraging words and teachings have had on their lives many years ago. I remember the early days when Jonathan first began to experience the “seer” gifting. I will let him tell you the full story in the following pages, but allow me to share with you my perspective.

Jonathan first began to “see in the spirit” when we were both attending a college-age charismatic youth group in upstate New York. At the time, we were close friends and both passionate for Jesus. I remember Jonathan pulling me aside at youth group to tell me about these strange experiences and what he was “seeing.” He seemed to be equally freaked out and excited by what was happening to him. Although he did not openly share these experiences with others for a long time, he felt that he could trust me with this information. I remember listening in awe and wonder.

Jonathan explained seeing strangers walking down the street;

some had a light or aura around them, and he knew they were filled with the Holy Spirit. He could see a dark cloud surrounding others, and he knew they were depressed or tormented by demons. Even more exciting to me were the angels—they usually radiated light or fire. He could describe the color and style of their garments, their facial expressions, and many other details. Certain angels carried staffs or swords, and some, but not all, had wings. Some angels were the size of men; others stood at eight or ten feet tall or taller. Occasionally, he would see angels who were assigned to specific Christians.

In youth group, when we worshipped the Lord with abandonment, countless angels would flood into the room. They would join with us in praising, singing, and dancing. Sometimes, when the worship was cut off, Jonathan saw them crying, knowing that the will of man had overruled what the Holy Spirit wanted to do. He described these experiences in profound detail, as if he saw them as clearly as he saw me.

Had I not known that Jonathan was an emotionally stable, well-respected leader who knew the Bible better than anyone I had ever met, I would have understandably been more skeptical. Instead, I wanted to know everything. I asked him endless questions: “What do you see right now? Do you see anything around me? Are there angels in this room? How do angels *look* to you? Can you see them physically, like you see me, or are they transparent, as if superimposed over the physical realm? Do you

see things in your mind's eye?" Many times during worship, I could not bear my excitement any longer, and I would lean over to Jonathan and whisper, "What's happening in the spirit realm right now? Do you see any angels? Where are they?" Most of the time he kept this information to himself, but if I was lucky, I could prod it out of him, and over time he grew more comfortable sharing with others.

Jonathan began a long journey of studying and writing about this gift, delving into the Scriptures and any book he could get his hands on for deeper revelation. The product of his study, seven years later, is the book you are holding in your hands.

Jonathan is a teacher in the true sense of the word. If there is one trait I respect most about teachers, it is not extensive knowledge, charismatic speaking, or even profound revelation. Although all of that is good, I incline my ear to those who continually submit their minds to the Holy Spirit, holding their knowledge not as a trophy but as a clay vessel that the Lord can mold and transform. Paul says, "Be transformed by the renewing of your mind (Rom. 12:2). I have seen this process eloquently modeled in my husband. Like all true teachers, he has never stopped learning.

Jonathan's experiences opened up a whole new world to me. I believed in angels and a spirit realm before, but his encounters made what I read about in the Bible so much more real. Since those

early days, I have learned how to grow in my own discernment, experience the spirit realm, and sense angels. Sometimes I can't help but feel like I have an unfair advantage with a seer as a husband! Of course, as you will read, true discernment goes far beyond the ability to see angels. There is a realm of revelation and experience that God has hidden *for* His children, not *from* them. If you are sincere and hungry, you will find it.

My early fascination and curiosity with the spirit realm is shared by many others, both in the Church and outside it. Most of the questions I pestered Jonathan with are the same questions he receives from people when they first hear about his ability to “see in the spirit.” God created us to have an appetite for the supernatural. I once heard it said, “We are not physical beings who occasionally have a temporary supernatural experience; we are supernatural beings having a temporary physical experience.” The spirit realm is all around us, and it is more real than the physical realm we live in and experience every day. Whether we believe in it or not, our lives are intricately affected by the invisible spirit realm.

Many people have encountered this unseen realm through the New Age, meditation, or other supernatural experiences. These individuals grasp the reality and power of the spirit realm, but the Church does not understand it and often condemns it. Because there is little biblical teaching in the Church today about the spirit realm, many believers have drifted away from the faith, sometimes

hurt or confused, because their hunger for the supernatural was quickly rebuked.

Other Christians in the Church have begun to experience supernatural phenomena, such as dreams, visions, open visions, or seeing angels and demons, but they lack solid biblical teaching and become what we have termed *seer orphans*. These individuals are desperately looking for someone to train them, encourage them, and release them. If the Church does not embrace its “seer orphans,” then the New Age movement will.

God is restoring the seer anointing and the gift of discernment to the Body of Christ. Jonathan shows how any Christian can safely and biblically experience the spirit realm through Jesus Christ, who is the source of all Truth. Whether you are a “seer orphan” searching for solid teaching or an individual longing to experience the spirit realm for yourself, this book will give you the tools you need to activate and sharpen your own discernment.

Above all, I pray that you would encounter the Lord beyond all your expectations. In fact, before you begin [Chapter 1](#), I dare you to ask the Holy Spirit to reveal himself to you supernaturally before you finish this book. I am convinced that God will always answer this prayer because He promised to draw near to us when we draw near to Him (James 4:8). May this book create a hunger in you to pursue the presence of God, discover the secrets of God, and open new realms of possibilities that you never dreamed

existed!

In Christ,
Karen Welton

INTRODUCTION

FOR MANY YEARS I have heard Christians talking about angels, spiritual warfare, prophecy, and the spirit realm. There have been multitudes of books written on each of these subjects, with many different teachings for each of them. I have asked myself many times, why write another book on this subject? How can I make it unique?

I am a fervent reader of all books about Christian spirituality and the supernatural. What I really enjoy, though, is finding something fresh, profound, and new. As one who is hungry to pursue more of God, and as a seeker of deep truths in the Word, I am attempting to write a book that no one else has written. My desire is to bring you fresh and deep revelation from the Word.

My goal is to create a practical manual for teaching the typical believer how to interact with the unseen realm. In our daily life, we are surrounded by spiritual forces and activities. However a lack of understanding exists inside the Church about how to interact with this reality. This is disturbing, considering that “New Agers” outside the Church tend to be very comfortable with the unseen realm and sometimes understand truths that the typical Christian hasn’t been taught.

The foundation for the teaching in this book is the Word of

God along with a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. It is important to remember that satan operates his kingdom by counterfeiting the true Kingdom of God. When making a counterfeit, such as money, the goal is to make the forgery look as much like the real as possible. A counterfeit tries to imitate the truth, yet it will never *be* the truth. Although some of the teachings in this book may seem controversial, by measuring them against the Word of God, we should be able to discern the difference between the truth of the Kingdom of God and the lies of the kingdom of darkness.

A counterfeit looks very similar to the real. We can't run away from the real just because there is a counterfeit. Unfortunately, that is what many Christians have done. You would not throw out your money just because there are counterfeiters in the world. Neither should we throw out understanding the spirit world and operating as born-again spirit beings just because there are counterfeits in the world.

Many Christians consider themselves inadequately equipped to understand deep things of the Spirit or operate in the supernatural. Perhaps this has been the case, but training now exists to bring the Church into maturity. That is the very purpose of the book in your hands—to equip the Body of Christ with the information needed to mature in walking in the supernatural.

Scripture gives confirmation to the idea of training people in

the supernatural. Take, for example, the following story from the Old Testament.

In First Kings 19:19-21, Elijah, the famous prophet of Israel, takes on an apprentice named Elisha. There was a significant increase of spiritual power when Elijah went home to be with the Lord, and Elisha received double the anointing that was on Elijah's life (see 2 Kings 2:12-14). In fact, Elisha has exactly twice as many recorded miracles as Elijah. Elisha then took on a servant of his own named Gehazi (see 2 Kings 4:12a).

It is my personal opinion that had Gehazi pursued a double portion of the anointing on Elisha, the Lord would have granted it to him as well. However, Gehazi's greed disqualified him from becoming Elisha's successor (see 2 Kings 5:20-27). He not only was disqualified, but was cursed with leprosy! At this point in the story, Elisha took on a new servant whose name is never revealed, so I refer to him as the "no-name" servant.

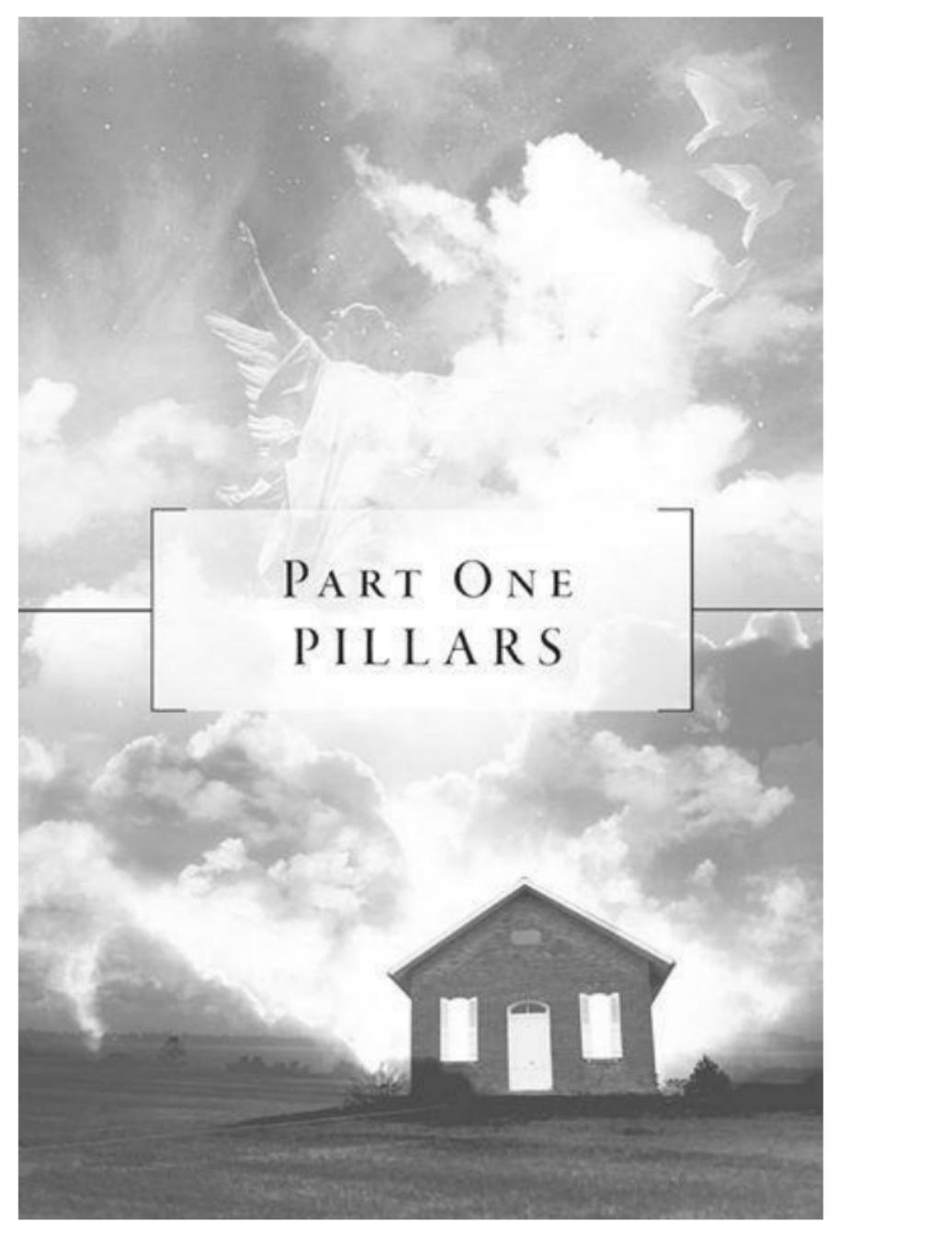
When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. "Oh, my lord, what shall we do?" the servant asked. "Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them." And Elisha prayed, "O Lord, open his eyes so he may see." Then the Lord opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha (2 Kings 6:15-17).

(Author's note: This portion of Scripture is rich with examples, so you will see it quoted several times throughout this book.)

The intention of this book is to lay a foundation for the Body of Christ to experience what the “no-name” servant experienced. I pray that the Lord would literally open your spiritual sight so that you may see into the unseen realm.

ACTIVATION

At the end of most chapters, you will see a section marked *Activation*, which is a unique feature of this book. Each activation suggests an exercise that will help you put the truth of the chapter into practice. These are basic exercises intended to stretch your spiritual muscles and prepare you to walk in the anointing of seeing in the spirit and discerning of spirits. The truths in this book are deep and stretching. In order to get the most out of this book, I strongly recommend that at the end of each chapter you stop, put in your bookmark, and do the activation exercise. You will receive the best assimilation of this material if you take my advice on this. Most of all, enjoy and have fun growing!



PART ONE
PILLARS

CHAPTER 1

THE MANTLE OF FIRE AND WATER *Where It All Began*

HOW WOULD YOU FEEL if a well-known prophet stood you up in a church service and prophesied that you would begin to see things in the spirit, that you would have a gift for discerning spirits, and that God would even teach you about being a “seer?” As many of you probably would be, I was excited, confused, and soon-to-be quite freaked out. To give some clarification, I have included the exact prophecy I received from Prophet Dennis Cramer:

March 7, 2002

You’re a young man with a tremendous call upon his life, very, very strong call...you have had some rumblings lately of prophetic ministry. And you thought maybe you were losing your mind. You thought, *Lord, my mind is going off. What’s wrong with my mind?* You’re also a man that is going to begin to discern spirits more than you ever wanted to. So, the Lord told me to tell you, Jonathan, you are not losing your mind; you are simply beginning to discern spirits as never before.

There is a good prophetic call upon your life... But also, as I said, especially discerning of spirits.

March 9, 2002

Jonathan, you have a strong seeing edge already developing in your life. You are uncomfortable with this because you don't know what you are seeing. It's caused you some distress. You've almost begun to feel a little rejected. But the Lord says all He is doing is teaching you about being *a seer*. Your own unique seeing gift and dimension The Lord says just keep your mouth shut; don't get too verbal about what you are seeing because you are still in the beginning stages of understanding this. So, the Lord says a seeing dimension is going to be well developed in your life in the years ahead.

THE GIFT IS ACTIVATED

The day that I received this word, I began to see things in the spirit around me. I had never had this gifting activated before, and so I was very startled with this new experience. I began to see colors in the spirit, words imposed over the physical things in front of me, body parts randomly appearing, fire or water descending on things, places, or people. I would on occasion even see angels or demons. When I first started seeing these things, I was surprised and even confused. I had to grow, learn, and come into understanding about what was happening. Even now, as I reread the second prophecy from Dennis Cramer, I see such wisdom in his statement, *“The Lord says just keep your mouth shut; don’t get too verbal about what you are seeing, because you are still in the beginning stages of understanding this.”*

I was really taken aback by this whole new gifting, especially since I didn’t have anyone to mentor me in seeing at the time. There are precious few in the Body of Christ who are willing to share their experiences. The Lord had to personally teach me about the things He was showing me.

FLIPPING THE SWITCH

About a month after Dennis Cramer prophesied over me, the frequency of the visions began to diminish, and again I was confused. I thought, *did I commit some sin that is hindering my seeing ability? Have I done something wrong? What is happening to my gift?*

The Holy Spirit showed me that in the previous month He had sovereignly demonstrated to me the potential of my seer gifting. Now the Lord would teach me how to activate my gifting. In the spirit I saw a large switch, much like a typical wall-mounted light switch. On the switch were the words “On” and “Off,” and then in my spirit I heard the meaning. In the first month the Holy Spirit had flipped my switch “On” to enable me to see in the spirit realm around me. Now He was flipping my switch to “Off,” and things would be totally normal again. The Holy Spirit told me that He would teach me how to flip the switch myself.

WE MOVE THE SWITCH BY FAITH

With all of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, we have a role in activating them. Sometimes the Holy Spirit will move sovereignly and heal someone, but most of the time faith must be activated. When we read the Gospels, we often see Jesus telling people to take an action—to show themselves to a priest, to wash the mud from their eyes, or to pick up their bed and walk. These were each acts of faith that, when activated, released the gift of healing.

If the Holy Spirit tells me to give a prophetic word, then I must take part in cooperating with the Spirit and deliver the word. When you activate faith, then you have stepped over into the things of the Kingdom realm: healing, prophecy, miracles, discerning of spirits, and so on. The Lord was moving me from relying only on sovereign experiences, into activating my faith to believe for the gift of discerning of spirits to function (see John 5:8; Mark 2:9; John 9:11; Luke 17:11-19).

IN MY EXPERIENCE

From my personal experience I can tell you that when God first opens your spiritual eyes as He did mine, it can be very scary, even terrifying. When it first started, I was not expecting to see into the spirit realm. I wasn't against such experiences—I was just unaware of them.

I would look at a fellow believer and see a background of illuminated light behind him, or I would see a nonbeliever and a darkness or cloud of depression on him. I would see large demonic presences hovering on or above certain buildings. I would see large warrior angels standing guard around certain buildings and churches. There were times I could see angels dancing among us at church during worship. At other times, I would see the worship get cut off by a speaker who was not following the Holy Spirit's leading, and I would see very sad expressions on the angel's faces. It looked as though they were crying because they knew what we were missing out on by worship being cut short. I would see angels carry in strange-looking internal organs that they would put inside of people, and then those same people would later testify to having been healed. I found these experiences overwhelming, and I want to clarify that I didn't read any books that encouraged or directed me in any of this.

BRAZIL

Six months after Dennis Cramer prophesied into my life, and five months after God began to teach me how I could activate my gifting, the Lord led me into the next level of training.

I took an opportunity to intern for Evangelist Randy Clark for a month in Brazil. While there, I met two seers who greatly encouraged me in my gifting. The first was Pastor Gary Oates. He had traveled with Randy the previous spring and had his own powerful encounter, which activated his spiritual eyes.

His story and experiences are similar to my own, especially in the sense that neither of us were seeking the ability to see—it was something God chose to give us. He is an excellent example of modern seership. God sovereignly opened Gary's eyes in an encounter where Gary had an out-of-body experience, and the Lord took him to Heaven. He writes about this in his book, *Open My Eyes, Lord.*¹

The second person that I met was Davi Silva, one of the foremost worship leaders in Brazil. He not only has an extensive background in musical training, but he also has an amazing testimony of healing. Born with Down syndrome, Davi was healed by the Lord at the age of six. Now in his forties, he still has the medical intricacies that Down syndrome patients have, yet without

having Down syndrome. Moreover, the Lord has blessed Davi with a very strong ability to see into the spirit realm.

When I met Davi, I asked him to lay hands on me and pray for an increase in my gifting. He was in a hurry to get the worship service started, but he still took a few minutes to pray for me. After he had prayed, he went off to lead worship. The following is what happened to me in that evening worship service.

A WHOLE NEW LEVEL

I don't usually respond physically to the Holy Spirit, not because I am unwilling, but I do not easily experience rolling, falling, laughing, or the other manifestations that people have in response to the Holy Spirit. Understanding that about me will help you understand how powerful the following experience was for me.

As worship began, I saw two angels standing on the stage, and they were unlike anything I had ever seen. They were about 15 feet tall, and there was fire coming out of them—six feet in every direction. I was standing in the front row of the church with Randy, so I was closer to the stage than the rest of the crowd around me when the closest angel began to walk toward me. I wanted to turn and run or get out of his way, but I was unable to move.

He came straight at me and reached out his hand. When he touched my chest, I collapsed to the floor on my side in the fetal position. The spiritual fire from his touch remained on me, causing me to create my own puddle of sweat on the cement floor of the church. In that moment, I began to see more clearly in the spirit than ever before.

The church held about 6,000 people, divided into six sections

of chairs. Over each section I saw another angel of fire about the size of a human man, and the fire only emanated out of them about six inches. As the worship intensified I saw more of these smaller angels come down through the ceiling and join the crowd of worshippers. The worship grew so intense that at the height of worship, while the fire angels continued to join in, the crowd looked like a field of grass on fire, an extreme wild fire of worship.

Then I saw a dark cloud over the crowd, and there was lightning flashing across the cloud. I heard two words in my spirit, "New mantle." Randy Clark, knowing that I could see in the spirit, came over to ask me what I was seeing, and I shared with him all that I have written here. Then I asked him to flatten me out on my back because I was in an awkward and uncomfortable position. He flattened me out, and I still did not have control of any of my body below my neck.

While stuck to the ground, I looked down at my body and I saw three angels on me. There was one on each of my legs holding me down with their hands. A third angel was sitting next to me using his right hand to press down on my chest. I could see that the two 15-foot angels of fire were still on the stage watching.

I felt a splash of water come across my chest as if someone had taken a water bottle and poured it on me. I looked around but couldn't figure out who had done it. Then it happened two more times a few minutes later. This felt so real in the natural that I was

actually getting annoyed. I didn't understand what this was until later.

Eventually the worship ended, and I was able to make it back to my seat with some help. Later on, I found an interpreter and spoke with Davi. I asked him what he had seen that evening, and he told me exactly what I had seen in his own words. He even included that the large angel of fire who had touched me at the beginning had told Davi that he was going to step off the stage and minister to me. Also, Davi saw the three angels lay a mantle over me. It had flames on top and water dripping from the bottom, which is why I had felt the water on my chest and heard in my spirit the words, "New mantle." I had been confused about seeing the dark clouds in the meeting, and then the Lord showed me in His Word about His presence coming in a dark cloud:

"...the mountain burned with fire to the midst of heaven, with darkness, cloud, and thick darkness" (Deuteronomy 4:11 NKJV).

"He made darkness His covering, His canopy around Him—the dark rain clouds of the sky. Out of the brightness of His presence clouds advanced, with hailstones and bolts of lightning" (Psalms 18:11-12).

"Clouds and thick darkness surround Him; righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne. Fire goes before

Him and consumes His foes on every side. His lightning lights up the world; the earth sees and trembles” (Psalms 97:2-4).

Since these experiences in Brazil, I have received this new mantle in my life. The Lord has increased my vision and ability to understand what is happening in the spirit. It is from these experiences that the Lord directed me into my call to teach others about the spirit realm.

ACTIVATION

The Lord taught me about activating my faith and “flipping my switch.” In this activation I direct you to prepare your heart for the Lord to teach you about flipping your spiritual switch. As a symbol of activating your faith, I recommend that you anoint yourself with oil. Go to your cupboard or pantry and find some olive or other safe food oil. Take a small dab and place it on yourself—you could put it on your forehead or wherever. As you do this, say this prayer in your own words:

Lord, I receive Your anointing. I desire to grow in my walk with You. I open my heart for more of Your work in and through me. I desire to fulfill the call on my life. I ask for Your anointing to run down upon me now (see Ps. 133).

ENDNOTES

1. Gary Oates, *Open My Eyes, Lord* (Dallas, GA: Open Heaven Publications, 2004).

CHAPTER 2

SPIRITUAL SENSES

BECAUSE THE GIFT OF DISCERNING of spirits is one of the more perplexing gifts, let me clarify some of my language about seeing in the spirit. No believer has the “gift of seeing in the spirit” because there is no such thing. The gift that is actually functioning when someone says that he or she is seeing in the spirit is the gift of discerning of spirits.

Discerning of spirits is a true gift of the Holy Spirit found in First Corinthians 12. The emphasis in this book is seeing in the spirit, which is just one way that discerning of spirits functions. Seers function in a high level of discerning of spirits, usually through spiritual sight. Later I will discuss more about the role of seers in the Church.

DISCERNING OF SPIRITS

The gift of discerning of spirits is a communication gift through which the Holy Spirit makes us aware of our spiritual atmosphere and environment around us. The main way that this functions is through our five spiritual senses that God placed within each of us at creation. To understand how we function in discerning of spirits, we must understand our spiritual senses. Most people only realize that they have five physical senses. The truth is that we have three sets of five senses.

Science has learned that the physical body has five senses that enable us to interact with the environment: taste, touch, smell, sight, and sound. In addition to your five physical senses, every person has five senses in their soul and five senses in their spirit.

May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thessalonians 5:23).

...Scripture has hundreds of verses that lay out clearly that we are a spirit, which has a soul and occupies a body. We are a three-part being consisting of a spirit, soul, and body.

SOUL SENSES

Experience and culture dictate our own individual reactions to taste, touch, smell, sound, and sight through our soul. For example, *smell* brings back memories. If I were to give flowers to one individual, it may bring back good memories like flowers from a wedding, but if I gave the same flowers to another person, it may bring back bad memories from a funeral. This is not a physical reaction to the flowers or their smell; it is a reaction from the individual soul.

If two people are walking together and they cross the path of a dog, one individual may like dogs and begin to pet the dog; however, the second person may be afraid and begin to feel uncomfortable. This is also a response from the individual soul senses. The way we *see* the world, and the way we *hear* others, is affected by the condition of our soul. Also, the willingness to *touch* certain things like a snake may be easy for some or terrifying for others, depending on the condition of the soul. Even the *taste* of some foods will bring varied responses from different people.

The human soul has senses just like the physical body. Each category of senses has a realm that it interacts with. The physical senses interact with the physical realm, the soul senses interact with the interpersonal realm. And the spirit has senses that interact with the spiritual realm.

Although there are hundreds of books that can help develop the soul or the body, this book is focused on the developing and operating of the spiritual senses.

SPIRIT SENSES

Author and teacher Harold Eberle offers great insight regarding our spiritual senses:

Just as we have five senses that provide us with information about the physical world, we also have senses in touch with the spiritual world. The spiritual senses are just as important as the physical senses. Unfortunately, most of us have not developed our spiritual senses.

Many Christians do not even believe they have any spiritual senses.

I like to ask them, “Has the devil ever tempted you?” Of course, they answer yes. Then I like to say, “Well, how did you hear the devil? You could not hear him if you did not have spiritual ears.” It is sad, but many people have more faith that the devil talks to us than that God talks to us. In reality, the Bible makes it clear that we all have spiritual eyes and ears.

When Elisha prayed for his servant, he did not pray for God to give him eyes, but he prayed that God would open up his eyes (see 2 Kings 6:17). In Ephesians 1:18, Paul did not pray for the saints to receive eyes, but for God to open the eyes of their hearts. We already have spiritual eyes and ears.

What we need is to have them opened. We need to become sensitive.¹

It is a fact that we have senses in our spirit through which we interact with the spirit realm. When the gift of discerning of spirits is functioning, it is through these spiritual senses that we receive communication.

In human communication, the two main senses we use most often for relating information are sound and sight. Communication in the natural is received through listening, as well as through body language and facial expressions. God also communicates through the other three senses (taste, touch, and smell), but most of the time He will speak through seeing and hearing. Because the spiritual senses of taste, smell, and touch are the least understood, the following examples show how, on occasion, God may speak to us through these senses.

TASTE

And He said to me, “Son of man, eat what is before you, eat this scroll; then go and speak to the house of Israel.” So I opened my mouth, and He gave me the scroll to eat. Then He said to me, “Son of man, eat this scroll I am giving you and fill your stomach with it.” So I ate it, and it tasted as sweet as honey in my mouth” (Ezekiel 3:1-3).

If we suddenly taste something sweet, sour, or salty, but the taste is not a result of anything we have physically had to eat or drink, we should ask the Lord if He is trying to speak to us. On occasion, in the Old Testament, God spoke to His prophets through experiences with spiritual taste.

SMELL

But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us, spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of Him (2 Corinthians 2:14).

In the spring of 2005 I was helping Randy Clark and Leif Hetland at one of their book tables in Nashville, Tennessee, when a large angel appeared at the end of the table by Leif's books, and a stir began among the people. To my knowledge, no one else was able to see what I was seeing, yet they could smell the change. I saw the angel pulling out small vials of heavenly fragrances, each one being very distinct. He pulled them from his belt and wafted them in the air. There was the scent of perfect cinnamon; then after about two minutes, a fresh scent would be put out. The scents were drastically different from one another: from the scent of cinnamon to wild flowers to baby oil and then to various spices. This continued through about 12 different smells, and by the end of 30 minutes there were about 30 people crowded together on the tips of their toes smelling the air and sharing in the experience.

TOUCH

As Jesus was on His way, the crowds almost crushed Him. And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for 12 years, but no one could heal her. She came up behind Him and touched the edge of His cloak, and immediately her bleeding stopped. "Who touched Me?" Jesus asked. When they all denied it, Peter said, "Master, the people are crowding and pressing against You." But Jesus said, "Someone touched Me; I know that power has gone out from Me" (Luke 8:43-46).

This is a great example of the difference between physical touch and spiritual touch. According to this story, Jesus was almost physically crushed, but when someone reached out and drew healing power out from His spirit, He declared that someone had touched Him, speaking spiritually, of course.

My friend Benjamin Valence and I had a spiritual experience together a few years ago. Ben wrote out the experience in his own words as he remembers it (notice how the senses of touch and smell were both operating).

I remember it like it was yesterday. Jonathan and I were sitting in his kitchen talking about things of the spirit when we

stepped into some activation. As we were talking about angels and things of the unseen realm, Jonathan suddenly told me there was something in front of me (in the spirit) on the table and that I should reach out my hands to feel what it was. To most this might seem a little weird, but he and I had been operating in discerning of spirits for quite a while, so I didn't hesitate. I reached out my hands and began to feel what was there; I could make out something that felt like a large bowl. It felt as real as if I was feeling a bowl in the natural realm. As I was telling Jonathan what I felt, he would confirm it by seeing in the spirit what I was touching. He would then ask me what else I felt, always trying to get me to reach a little deeper. As I felt out the bowl Jon asked me to feel inside of it, and as I reached into the bowl I could literally feel a hot liquid on my hand. After realizing I could feel heat coming from the bowl when I placed my hands inside it, I tried putting my face over it. As soon as I did, my face became hot, and I began to sweat; it was incredible. After a while of playing with the bowl, Jon told me that it was oil and asked me to pick it up and to pour it over my head. As soon as I reached for the bowl and began to tilt it over my head, Jon and I looked at each other, and as if repeating each other's words said, "Did you smell that?" At the same moment we both smelled the scent of oil fill the room. Excitement boiled inside me as I raised the bowl over my head and began to pour it out. I could actually feel the oil running down over my head and heat coming from the substance. I will never forget the feeling of the oil running over me as if consuming my senses. I felt peace, joy, and

love of the Father washing over me. I will never forget that day.

FOCUS ON THE LORD

Once I started to share what I was able to see, people were very hungry to have similar experiences and would ask me how they could begin to see. Since God had sovereignly given me this gift that I had not sought out, I didn't know what to tell them, until I found a key in Matthew 5:8.

I understood impartation through the laying on of hands; therefore I would pray for impartation to anyone interested, but I was only seeing a fraction of people receive the gifting. (I will address impartation in greater detail in a later chapter.) Over the last several years, the Lord has taught me some principles that have opened the door for more people to be able to activate their faith for the gift of discerning of spirits. The first one that I want to share is the principle of Matthew 5:8, which was the first insight the Lord gave me: "*Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God*" (Matt. 5:8).

How pure does a person have to be to see God? I believe that the answer is in asking the right question, "What is meant by purity?" The vast majority of believers hold the word *pure* as a moral standard that is unattainable. Jesus was speaking of purity as a key to seeing God and I believe He told us this because it is attainable.

To illustrate the meaning of *pure*, take gold as an example. When gold has been truly purified, it has had all the other elements removed from it. This process causes all the dross and impurities to come to the surface so it can be skimmed away. In the end, it produces gold that is one single element. Our hearts are sometimes cluttered with the dross of life, and we must remove all the distractions so we can focus our whole heart on God. For us to have a “pure” heart, our heart must be focused. If we are to “see God,” then the one element our heart contains must be a focus on the Lord.

When we focus our hearts on the Lord, we are aimed to come into the experience of seeing God. The verse is clearer if we read it this way, “Happy are those who focus their heart on God, for they will actually see God.”

FAITH AND THE EMPTY CHAIR

The following story is a favorite of mine. It is a great illustration of what it means to focus your heart on Jesus using the eyes of your imagination.

A man's daughter had asked the local minister to come and pray with her father. When the minister arrived, he found the man lying in bed with his head propped up on two pillows. An empty chair sat beside his bed. The minister assumed that the old man had been informed of his impending visit. "I guess you were expecting me," he said. "No, who are you?" said the father. "I'm the new minister at your church," he replied. "When I saw the empty chair, I figured you knew I was going to show up."

"Oh yeah, the chair," said the bedridden man. "Would you mind closing the door?" Puzzled, the minister shut the door. "I have never told anyone this, not even my daughter," said the man. "But all of my life I have never known how to pray. At church I used to hear the preacher talk about prayer, but it went right over my head."

"I abandoned any attempt at prayer," the old man continued, "until one day about four years ago my best friend said to me, 'Joe, prayer is just a simple matter of having a conversation with Jesus. Here is what I suggest. Sit down in a chair; place an empty

chair in front of you, and, in faith, see Jesus in the chair. It's not spooky because He promised, "I'll be with you always." Then just speak to Him and listen in the same way you're doing with me right now."

"So, I tried it and I've liked it so much that I do it a couple of hours every day. I'm careful though. If my daughter saw me talking to an empty chair, she'd either have a nervous breakdown or send me off to the funny farm."

The minister was deeply moved by the story and encouraged the old man to continue on the journey. Then he prayed with him and returned to the church building. Two nights later the daughter called to tell the minister that her daddy had died that afternoon. "Did he die in peace?" he asked.

"Yes, when I left the house about two o'clock, he called me over to his bedside, told me he loved me, and kissed me on the cheek. When I got back from the store an hour later, I found him dead. But there was something strange about his death. Apparently, just before Daddy died, he leaned over and rested his head on the chair beside the bed. What do you make of that?" The minister wiped a tear from his eye and said, "I wish we all could go that way."

ACTIVATION I

For the first exercise we are going to talk to Jesus like the old man in the story did. First put in your bookmark and set the book down, then close your eyes and with your imagination, picture Jesus.

Now engage in a conversation with Him. If you cannot think of anything to say, you can always start by thanking Him for the things He has done in your life. For example, salvation, physical healing, emotional freedom, baptism in the Holy Spirit, financial blessing, reconciliation with others, divine favor, deliverance, and the fruit and gifts of the Spirit. Do not forget to listen to the Lord speaking back to you.

ACTIVATION II

For the second activation, you are going to pray a simple prayer, consecrating your senses to the Lord.

Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to Him as instruments of righteousness (Romans 6:13).

Pray this prayer of offering in your own words:

Lord,

I offer to You all the parts of my body including my spiritual senses. My spiritual ability to see, hear, taste, smell, and touch I give to You alone. I offer myself to You as an instrument of righteousness.

ENDNOTES

1. Harold Eberle, *Partnership Newsletter* (Yakima, WA: World Cast Ministries, May 2008).

CHAPTER 3

IMPARTATION

TO UNDERSTAND IMPARTATION , you have to understand anointing, which in the Bible means “a smearing.” In Scripture, oil is symbolic of the Holy Spirit. When a prophet or priest poured, rubbed, or smeared oil over the head of someone, it was referred to as anointing that person. This actually gave the anointed person a measure of the oil that belonged to the prophet or priest. This is commonly referred to as *transferring the anointing*.

In the Old Testament, the oil was used to signify the passing of the anointing. In the New Testament we find that the anointing of the Holy Spirit can now be passed through the laying on of hands because the anointing abides within us: “*But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you...*” (1 John 2:27).

IMPARTATION IS FOUNDATIONAL

The apostle Paul named the laying on of hands as one of the six basic fundamental doctrines a Christian should understand. This places it in the very foundation of our Christian beliefs. In many circles of the modern Church, impartation is ignored, if not denied all together; in the first century, it was considered a foundational truth:

Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrines about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of... the laying on of hands... (Hebrews 6:1-2).

Paul also thought of impartation as part of the process of becoming established. He imparted spiritual gifts to the Roman believers to give them a better foundation: “For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established...” (Rom. 1:11 NKJV).

IMPARTATION IS INTENTIONAL

In the Old Testament, the anointing was a very purposeful, pronounced event. Impartation occurs not just because of touch, but because a person places his or her hands on you by the direction of the Holy Spirit with a goal in mind. Intentionally, the impartation occurs.

To say that impartation occurs every time touch occurs would be similar to saying that if an Old Testament prophet had a leaky oil flask, then everything that he dripped oil on was anointed to be king. If it were just touch, then every time you shook someone's hand, you would have some of him or her rub off on you. This is not biblical, and we are not promoting such superstition. We intentionally give that which we have, by the direction of the Holy Spirit: "*what I have I give you...*" (Acts 3:6).

IMPARTATION IS BIBLICAL

There are many other examples throughout the Bible of individuals or groups of people receiving an impartation from the Lord through another person. Let's look at a few of these.

Joshua and Moses: *Now Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him; so the children of Israel heeded him, and did as the Lord had commanded Moses (Deut. 34:9 NKJV).*

Moses and the Elders: *So Moses went out and told the people the words of the Lord, and he gathered the seventy men of the elders of the people and placed them around the tabernacle. Then the Lord came down in the cloud, and spoke to him, and took of the Spirit that was upon him, and placed the same upon the seventy elders; and it happened, when the Spirit rested upon them, that they prophesied. (Num. 11:24-25a NKJV).*

Elijah and Elisha: *And so it was, when they had crossed over, that Elijah said to Elisha, "Ask! What may I do for you, before I am taken away from you?" Elisha said, "Please let a double portion of your spirit be upon me" (2 Kings 2:9 NKJV).*

Peter: *Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk" (Acts 3:6 NKJV).*

Paul and Timothy: *Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership* (1 Tim. 4:14).

Timothy was deeply impacted by impartation. Specifically, as a result of impartation, he received a spiritual gift through the laying on of hands and prophecy by a prophetic presbytery of elders: *“Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands”* (2 Tim. 1:6 NKJV).

IMPARTATION IS INDIVIDUAL

Does everyone receive the same level of impartation when hands are laid on? Some have thought that if a famous Christian leader lays his or her hands on an individual, then the receiver will get an impartation that instantly gives them an equal portion of the anointing.

It is the mercy of God that protects us from receiving more than we can handle. As Pastor Bill Johnson of Redding, California, says, “Revelation always brings responsibility, and hunger is the thing that prepares our hearts to carry the weight of that responsibility.”¹ Our character must be able to uphold the amount of power we carry, or else we are a danger to those around us. So the answer is no, not everyone receives the same level of anointing in impartation. God knows what you need, and what you can handle.

IMPARTATION IS A SEED, NOT A FULL-GROWN PLANT

The parable of the sower (see Luke 8:4-15) teaches us how the farmer spreads the seeds for salvation, and it also teaches us a principle of how we receive from God. Our heart is the soil, and Father God is the farmer who spreads seed, which is the Word of God (or, for our analogy, impartation). He casts it into the soil of our heart. Then the birds, which are demonic attacks, come to kill, steal, and destroy.

This is where the variation in impartation can occur. The difference in how any seed grows depends on the soil in which it is planted and how prepared and ready that soil is for seeds to grow. After the seed is planted, it can grow very quickly if it is given the proper water (time in the presence of the Holy Spirit—see John 7:38-39) and sunlight (Jesus is the light that the seed needs to grow—see 2 Cor. 4:4).

To my knowledge, those who have some of the most powerful impartations are among the following: those who are hungry for more of God, pastors who are tired and burned out, and people whose ministry is desperate for a breakthrough. They are people whose soil is eager for seed, and almost as soon as the seed hits the soil, something sprouts. The soil is already prepared with water and sunlight, but the impartation is needed to move into

producing. In contrast, there are those who have no hunger for God, do not spend time with the Holy Spirit, and do not walk in the light of Christ, leaving their hearts as hard as rocky soil. Usually, God has to plow this ground before any seed can grow there.

One other factor in farming is the needed pressure that dirt places against a seed so that the shell cracks open and the seed can begin to grow. Seeds that have never sprouted, because they have never been planted in dirt, have been found in the tombs of pharaohs. Some of these seeds, which are over 4,000 years old, have since been planted in dirt and have sprouted and produced. That is why seeds of salvation can be tossed out on the ground of peoples' hearts day after day with no results, but when the trials of life give the needed pressure, the seeds crack open and life sprouts.

This pressure comes into the impartation discussion because not only spiritually hungry people get powerful impartation. Sometimes it is a person about to lose his or her ministry, or someone about to give up from difficulty. Someone under tremendous pressure in life may be the most ready for the seed of impartation to be planted in his or her heart.

YOU CAN ONLY IMPART WHAT YOU POSSESS

It is crucial that we understand this next point: you can only impart what you possess—if you possess it, you can impart it. If you don't have it, don't lay hands on another and declare impartation. If you only have olive anointing oil in your flask, you can't declare and impart cedar anointing oil to someone else. Yes, pray that God would give it to them. But don't go claiming to impart what you don't have in your own life. You cannot impart resurrection power to someone if you have never raised the dead, but you can declare and prophesy it over someone if the Lord directs you.

“The double portion,” as it relates to impartation, is a phrase commonly heard in some church circles. To understand the double portion correctly, consider the following scenario. If an Old Testament prophet was sent to anoint a king and the prophet has ten ounces of anointing oil in his flask, he can only give the king ten ounces. If the king asks him to give him a double portion of all the anointing that the prophet had, this would mean that he wanted not 10 ounces, but 20 ounces. He cannot give 20 because he only has 10. That is double the portion of all the anointing that the prophet has. This is what Elisha did when he asked for a double portion of Elijah's anointing. Elijah responded by saying, “*You have asked a difficult thing*” (2 Kings 2:10a). Then, because an

individual does not have the ability to give a double portion to another person, Elijah puts the responsibility on God by saying, *“If you see me when I am taken from you, it will be yours—otherwise not”* (2 Kings 2:10b). This is a proper understanding of the concept of the double portion referred to by Elisha. Notice that even the prophet Elijah was not able to freely give away the double portion; he responded, in essence, that God would have to do it. It may prove wise to use this term with a little more caution.

First Timothy 5:22 raises another important question regarding the practice of impartation: *“Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, and do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure.”* If pulled out of its original context, this verse can seem very contradictory to everything I have presented in this chapter. A large part of First Timothy is written about setting church leadership into positions of authority. All of [Chapter 3](#) lays out detailed qualifications about what type of person is to be put into leadership. A few verses earlier, Paul writes, *“The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, ‘Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain,’ and ‘The worker deserves his wages.’ Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses. Those who sin are to be rebuked publicly, so that the others may take warning”*(1 Tim. 5:17-20).

In First Timothy, Paul is writing about the laying on of hands

for setting leadership into positions of authority. This has nothing to do with the concept of impartation. It would not make sense for Paul to write in Hebrews 6 and Romans 1 that he wanted to lay hands on baby Christians that *“they may be established”* (Rom. 1:11), and then to warn in First Timothy that you can share in the sins of others by laying hands on them. If he is referring to the same type of laying on of hands in both passages, then wouldn't he say to “keep yourself pure” by not laying hands on people who are not yet “established” (1 Tim. 5:22; Rom. 1:11)? There are two different types of laying on of hands: one for setting leaders into places of authority, and the second for imparting and transferring anointing. There are qualifications and restrictions on the first type, but the second type actually propels you toward being qualified. Transference of the anointing by the laying on of hands for impartation is for each and every Christian and is not held back; in fact, it exists to help you grow.

ACTIVATION

There are many Scripture verses that validate the fact that impartation can occur through the touching of physical objects (see Matt. 9:20; 14:35-37; Acts 19:11-12). The exercise for this chapter will be a prayer for receiving impartation. Place one hand on this book, while placing your other hand on yourself. Put this prayer in your own words and stir up your faith:

I receive an impartation right now from the Holy Spirit for an increase in discerning of spirits. I receive anointing for my eyes to see (see Rev. 3:18), I receive an impartation for the eyes of my understanding to be enlightened (see Eph. 1:17-18), and I receive an impartation for greater vision in the spirit realm.

ENDNOTES

1. Bill Johnson, *Dreaming With God* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image, 2006), p. 60.

CHAPTER 4

WE CAN ALL SEE

You Can Learn

MANY PEOPLE DO NOT UNDERSTAND that spiritual gifts can be taught. The apostle Paul said that he didn't want us to be ignorant about the spiritual gifts (see 1 Cor. 12:1), and what corrects ignorance better than teaching?

Some say that Paul was only referring to teaching about the gifts in a general sense rather than activating the gifts as in a classroom setting. If Paul was against the idea of activations so that all may learn, then why would he say, *"For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged"* (see 1 Cor. 14:31 NKJV)?

The gifts can be taught, learned, and activated. Paul also set a precedent by encouraging his spiritual son, Timothy, to activate his gifting: *"Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands"* (2 Tim. 1:6). I believe that this charge applies to us as well; we are to activate our giftings, not merely to wait and hope that the Holy Spirit will cause our gift to activate: *"But solid food belongs to those who are*

of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil” (Heb. 5:14).

HOW MANY GIFTS DO I HAVE?

Many have been taught that they only have access to one (possibly more but not all) of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. This teaching has limited the operation of the Holy Spirit in the Church because believers will not step out in faith to use a gift, since it might not be “their gift.” When they do not step out, they do not find out what their gifting is, and satan has effectively immobilized the use of the spiritual gifts.

There are two main verses that have been misunderstood and misapplied, and this has caused most of the confusion surrounding the spiritual gifts. These verses seem to say that we as individuals have a limited access to the gifts that have been given to the Church.

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all...distributing to each one individually as He wills (1 Corinthians 12:7-11 NKJV).

As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God (1 Peter 4:10 NKJV).

There is a teaching that expands on First Peter 4:10, stating that each Christian has been given only one gift (possibly two or

three but not more), and this gift is resident within the individual and can be called on at any time. First Corinthians 12:11 also seems to be in agreement with this concept. I agree with this teaching, but only when it is balanced by a seemingly contradictory idea.

THE FAITH LEVEL OF OPERATION

Although First Corinthians 12 gives us a list of nine spiritual gifts and says that the Holy Spirit distributes to each one individually as He wills, we find what seems to be a contradiction. It also says of the gifts that “... *God works all in all*” (1 Cor. 12:6). How can the Holy Spirit give you a gift, uniquely yours, if He also gives everyone that same gift?

Another seeming contradiction is prophecy. It appears on our list of nine special gifts given to individuals, yet we read, “*For you can all prophesy...*” (1 Cor. 14:31).

And what about the gift of healing? Is it a gift that only some have, or should we all lay our hands on the sick and see healing? As Mark 16:17-18 says, “*And these signs will accompany those who believe: ...they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.*” If I don’t have the gift of healing available to me, how could I be responsible for not praying for the sick? Yet I am commanded to heal the sick in Matthew 10:8: “*Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.*” How can God be “just” if He commands me to do something for which He has not equipped me?

Lastly, what about discerning of spirits? Hebrews 5:14 says, “*But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those*

who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.” But if only some Christians have been given the gift of discerning of spirits, then how can God ask that we all discern good from evil?

THREE DIFFERENT LEVELS IN THE GIFTS

The missing piece here is that there are three different levels of the spiritual gifts. Take prophecy, for example: On the highest level you have the office of the prophet mentioned in Ephesians 4:11-13; on the middle level is the gift of prophecy found in First Corinthians 12:10; and on the lowest level is the faith level where Paul says, “*you can all prophesy*” (1 Cor. 14:31). The progression works like a triangle; at the bottom, everyone can prophesy; as you move to the middle of the triangle, some people will have the actual gift of prophecy; lastly, there will be a few people at the top of the triangle who have the calling of a prophet. Just because you can prophesy does not mean you have the gift of prophecy, and just because you have the gift of prophecy does not mean that you have the office and calling of a prophet.

Let us take the triangle of three levels and apply it to discernment. On the top of the triangle we find the office of the seer; at the middle there is the gift of discerning of spirits; and at the bottom we have the faith level referred to in Hebrews 5:14: “*those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*” As with prophecy, just because you can discern does not mean that you have the gift of discerning of spirits, and even if you can see in the spirit and have the gift of discerning of spirits, this does not mean that you are in the office and calling of a seer. Many have operated

in the lower two levels and have declared themselves to be prophets and seers in the Body of Christ, and this has brought much unnecessary spiritual warfare against them. It is spiritually dangerous to declare that you are a prophet or a seer unless you truly are one. A surefire way to know if you are a prophet or a seer is to look at the one passage that gives the New Testament job description of a true prophet: *“And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ”* (Eph. 4:11-12 NKJV). The New Testament prophet is supposed to be equipping others for the work of ministry; if you are not equipping others in prophecy, then you are probably not a prophet.

“HAVING EYES, DO YOU NOT SEE?” **(MARK 8:18)**

Many verses in the Bible state that all Christians can and should have their spiritual eyes and ears open and functioning. We often pass over clear references to spiritual sight because we have been told that seeing in the spirit is not our gift. Here is a quick overview of seven sections of Scripture that speak of how every believer should have their spiritual eyes operating.

1. Hebrews 5:12-14: *“For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil”* (NKJV).

This shows that a sign of all mature Christians is that they will be active in using discernment. This is not only available to us, but it is also a sign of maturity. It is time to grow and start using our discernment.

2. Ephesians 1:15-18: *“Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that*

the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints” (NKJV).

If Paul believed that only certain Christians could see in the spirit, then why would he be wasting his time praying for all the Ephesian believers to have the eyes of their understanding enlightened? Obviously, Paul believed that all of them could have their spiritual eyes opened.

3. Second Kings 6:15-17: *“And when the servant of the man of God arose early and went out, there was an army, surrounding the city with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, “Alas, my master! What shall we do?” So he answered, “Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.” And Elisha prayed, and said, “Lord, I pray, open his eyes that he may see.” Then the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha” (NKJV).*

Elisha didn't pray, “If it is my servant's gifting, open his eyes.” No, Elisha knew that God wanted to open the eyes of the servant, as God always wants to open the eyes of His servants. There is no question that God has given us all spiritual eyes that would have worked perfectly before the Fall of Adam—why

shouldn't they work in every born-again believer?

4. Revelation 3:17-18: *“Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see”* (NKJV).

Spiritually we are poor and naked, and God wants to spiritually clothe us and give us spiritual riches. But the third part of the verse still causes offense to some—that we are blind and that God wants us to anoint our eyes with eye salve so that we may see. But we are spiritually blind, and God has provided an anointing that can open the spiritual eyes of every believer. God has not excluded even one person by limiting His gifts to only a few. This anointing of Revelation 3 is available to all, as is the clothing and gold that He has provided for us.

5. Luke 4:18: *“The Spirit of the Lord is on Me, because He has anointed Me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed.”*

This verse is rarely thought of as referring to spiritual sight, but let us look a little closer. Jesus said that He was anointed to

preach good news to the poor, which is a spiritual activity. He was anointed to proclaim freedom to the prisoners and to release the oppressed. I propose that this does not refer to actual prisoners and oppressed people, as evidenced by the fact that Jesus was not literally opening jail cells to set captives free. Instead, He healed and freed hearts and delivered others of demonic oppression. This leads to the conclusion that perhaps Jesus was not only healing the physically blind, which He certainly did, but also the spiritually blind.

6. Matthew 7:1-5: *“Do not judge or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, “Let me take the speck out of your eye,” when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye”*

Clearly Jesus, using metaphor and hyperbole (exaggeration to make a point), is not speaking of the physical eye. He is speaking of how we see the world through the eyes of our heart, and how at times we get a speck or a log that hinders our seeing. This also speaks of how hypocrisy operates.

7. First John 2:9-11: *“Anyone who claims to be in the light but*

hates his brother is still in the darkness. Whoever loves his brother lives in the light, and there is nothing in him to make him stumble. But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness; he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.”

When a Christian hates another believer, does that Christian go physically blind? Of course not! This is speaking of how hate blinds our spiritual eyes. We must operate our discernment through love. Hate hinders, obscures, and destroys Christ-like discernment.

AN OPEN HEART

The issue of who has what gifts and how many one person can operate in has been the topic of much debate in certain church circles. I hope this quick overview of seven examples of God's desire for every person to operate in spiritual sight has helped to open your heart and your mind. There is so much more available to us, and we must remain open to finding new truth in the Word. We should heed what the apostle Paul said and "*...eagerly desire the greater gifts*" (1 Cor. 12:31). Now that we understand the levels among the gifts, we can truly pursue greater gifts.

ACTIVATION

The words *revelation*, *interpretation*, and *application* can serve as a simple and straightforward way to process information from the spirit realm. First, God shows you something. Second, you ask the Lord, what the revelation means. Third, ask the Lord what you should do with the information that He just gave you.

Revelation: Ask the Lord to show you a picture in your imagination.

Interpretation: Ask the Lord what the picture means.

Application: Ask the Lord what you should do in response. Perhaps you should just receive the picture and be encouraged, but He may say that the picture is for someone else and that you should encourage that person with what He showed you.

Write out in your journal the revelation and the interpretation and application, this will keep the revelation for future encouragement. These three steps can be remembered as the acronym R.I.A. and can be applied to any vision, dream, or picture from the Lord.

CHAPTER 5

PROPHETS AND SEERS

THE QUESTION THAT I get asked the most is, “What is a seer?” The response I give is different, depending on who is asking. There are three general categories of people who ask this question, and I answer according to which group they are a part of.

If the person asking is not a Christian, then I cannot use Christian lingo to explain it. I use terms they might understand and mold my answer to make sense to them. I might respond by saying, “A person who operates as a seer can see into the spirit realm around us, similar to a psychic person. The difference is that a Christian has legal access to operate in that realm because Jesus lives inside of a Christian. A psychic has no right to operate in that realm, and it is dangerous for them to do so. God communicates to seers through visions, open visions, and dreams, as well as many other ways.”

If the person is a Christian, but they have no familiarity with prophets and prophecy, then I would probably say something like, “Remember how in the Old Testament Samuel would have visions and speak God’s Word to others? Well, that is what a seer and a

prophet do. God talks to seers and prophets in different ways; then they take those messages and declare them to the Church to bring vision, direction, and encouragement.”

When a person who is very familiar with prophets and prophecy asks, “What is a seer?” there are usually a few other questions implied. The implied questions are various: “Does it matter that we distinguish between seers and prophets?” “Are seers in the New Testament?” “Who are the seers in the Bible?” and “How are prophets and seers different?” Since the previous two groups have just been answered, I will answer these questions in more detail.

Q: Does it Matter That We Distinguish Between Seers and Prophets?

A: The Bible is our example. If it is important to God, then it should be important to us. Scripture is not arbitrary in the use of the titles *seer* and *prophet*. Individuals were referred to as one or the other. This was not a synonymous term that was thrown around interchangeably. Here is an example of Scripture very specifically separating the two terms: “*As for the events of King David’s reign, from beginning to end, they are written in the records of Samuel the seer, the records of Nathan the prophet and the records of Gad the seer...*” (1 Chron. 29:29). God clearly distinguished between Samuel and Gad as seers and Nathan as a prophet. If it is important to God, then it should be important to

us.

Q: Who Are the Seers in the Bible?

A: There are nine people identified as seers in the Old Testament. There are many others who operated at times in the gifting of a seer such as Balaam, Elisha, Daniel, and Zechariah, but they were never given the title of “seer” in the Bible. Only nine people have been given the name, title, and calling of seer. Listed here are the nine, the scriptural reference of their title as a seer, and the main position that they fulfilled.

Samuel	1 Chronicles 29:29	Governmental advisor
Gad	1 Chronicles 29:29	Governmental advisor
Zadok	2 Samuel 15:27	Chief priest
Hanani	2 Chronicles 16:7	Grandson of Samuel
Iddo	2 Chronicles 9:29	Priest
Amos	Amos 7:12	Sycamore fig picker, marketplace minister
Asaph	2 Chronicles 29:30	Worship leader, author of Psalms 50 and 73-83

Jeduthun	2 Chronicles 35:15	Worship leader
Heman	1 Chronicles 25:5	Worship leader, author of Psalm 88

Take note of the positions that the seers fulfilled. One-third of them were governmental or marketplace oriented, one-third of them were worship leaders, and one-fourth were in formal priesthood ministry. Also we can see from Hanani that the seer anointing can be passed generationally. Many times the title of seer is applied to others such as Ezekiel and Elisha, but these nine are the only ones in the entire Bible who God refers to as seers.

Q: Are There Seers in the New Testament?

A: According to First Samuel 9:9, *“Formerly in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, he spoke thus: ‘Come, let us go to the seer’; for he who is now called a prophet was formerly called a seer.”* In our modern day we can lose the history and context behind biblical words. This verse shows us that in the progression of the Hebrew language; they blended the word *seer* into the word *prophet* and called them the same thing. A prophet and a seer refer to the same calling, yet the way that they receive their revelation from the Lord functions differently. The seers continued to minister in Israel, so this was not a dismissal of seers but merely a change in language trends. This is similar to the fact that there are electrical engineers, mechanical engineers, civil engineers, and many

other kinds, with a world of difference between them, but for convenience we just say engineer.

When we read the New Testament, we find no reference to the word *seers*. This is because the first-century reader understood that the word *prophet* was inclusive of both prophets and seers. (If First Samuel 9:9 had eliminated the use of the term *prophet* in favor of the word *seer*, then we would still have five New Testament offices listed in Ephesians 4:11, but prophet would be included under seer). When first-century believers read the words of Paul in Ephesians 4:11, they technically saw six ministries, not just five: “*It was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets [the word prophet is inclusive of seers], some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers*” (Eph. 4:11). Seers and prophets still both exist, and they are both called to deliver the prophetic word of the Lord, but they function differently (more on that later).

Q: How Are Prophets and Seers Different?

A1: A simple way to determine whether someone is a prophet or a seer in the Bible is to watch for the prophetic prefix they use. If, when they prophesy, they say, “The Lord would say,” then it is likely they are hearing the word of the Lord bubble up inside of them as a prophet. The root word for prophet is *nabi*. Dennis Cramer gives a great explanation of what *nabi* means:

The Hebrew word for *prophet* (occurring 300 times in the Old Testament) means a suddenly inspired person. The word implies one who bubbles up, one who flows forth. Some might call this biblical phenomenon *prophetic effervescence*—the sudden bubbling up or flowing forth of the prophetic message from deep within the human spirit. Many prophetic believers, whether they are prophets or merely prophetic, will experience this type of prophesying. “Nabi” style prophecy is a spontaneous bubbling up, a sudden inspiration to prophesy with little or no foreknowledge.¹

A2: A seer would more often say, “The Lord showed me,” or “it was likened unto,” or “I saw,” and then an explanation would follow. Paula Price, the author of *The Prophet’s Dictionary* writes of seers,

The Hebrew word for seer is one who receives communications from God more from visions and dreams than audible words. Prophets who say they saw the word of the Lord more than heard it is an example of this type of prophet.²

Well-known prophetic author Cindy Jacobs writes in her book *The Voice of God*,

Prophets in the Old Testament at one time were called “seers.” This means that they literally or figuratively saw

things in the Spirit. Some of the prophets were more pictorial in their gifts than others, such as Ezekiel who saw visions of heavenly creatures. Certain prophetic people today receive their prophetic words mainly through pictures. Their prophecies will often be interpretations of pictures or inner visions they see.³

Typically, prophets and seers teach others to receive revelation in the way that they receive it. For the prophet, this would be hearing the inward voice of the Holy Spirit. For the seer who receives revelation in a more visual way, this would be taught as dreams, mental pictures, visions that appear before their eyes (sometimes called an open vision), angelic messengers, and experiences in Heaven or in the unseen realm.

There are many different ways that God talks to seers, so each seer is different. Some seers are almost strictly spoken to through dreams, whereas some have the ability to use their spiritual eyes and see into the unseen realm as Elisha did:

And Elisha prayed, "O Lord, open his eyes so he may see." Then the Lord opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha (2 Kings 6:17).

ENDNOTES

1. Dennis Cramer, *School of Prophecy, Level One* (Williamsport, PA: Dennis Cramer Ministries, 1998), 54.
2. Paula A. Price, *The Prophet's Dictionary* (Tulsa, OK: Flaming Vision Publications, 2002), 494.
3. Cindy Jacobs, *The Voice of God* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1995), 223.

CHAPTER 6

THE UNSEEN REALM

“So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, for what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal” (2 Corinthians 4:18).

WE HAVE IN THIS PASSAGE four different words that are important to understand: *seen*, *unseen*, *temporary*, and *eternal*. The *seen* is what we call the physical realm, that which is visible to the physical eye. This realm can be studied and experienced through our natural five senses of taste, touch, sound, sight, and smell.

The *unseen* is another realm. Like the physical realm, it also can be experienced with the five senses. The five senses of our physical body do not interact with the unseen realm, but we have five senses in our spirit that interact with this realm. The physical realm and spiritual realm are what Paul was writing about when he refers to the seen and unseen.

Then we have the *eternal* and the *temporary*. The eternal is any realm other than the physical. For example, ten billion years ago, God existed in the heavens and in the spirit. Ten billion years from now God will still exist in the heavens and in the spirit. When

Paul writes of the temporary, he is speaking of this physical realm that began in Genesis 1 and continues only until it is replaced with the New Earth in Revelation 22. If you were to draw a line to represent time and it extended infinitely into the past and infinitely into the future, and if you were to put a one inch mark on this line, this would give you an idea of what the time-span of the physical realm looks like from Heaven's perspective. This is a good perspective to have when considering the reality of the spirit realm.

Many have stated that the spirit realm is just as real as the physical realm; this is in fact a huge understatement. The truth is that the spirit realm is far more real than the physical realm. In fact, if you were to die this very second while reading this book, you would immediately be dwelling in the spirit realm. You are one heartbeat away from existing entirely in the spirit realm. Yet some live their entire lives denying the existence of the spirit realm.

When an angel appears in the physical realm, people generally think that the angel came from Heaven. It is true that the Lord's angels do have their home in Heaven with God, but they can also surround us on the earth in the unseen realm, such as with Elisha and his servant in Second Kings 6. They sometimes manifest in the seen realm to speak a message, and then step back into the unseen realm, such as with Balaam in Numbers 22. At times this delivery of a message can take much time and warfare that we may not be fully aware of. For example, the angels Michael and Gabriel

had to war together against the prince of Persia (possibly a regional evil spirit) to be able to finally break through 21 days of warfare and deliver a message to Daniel (see Dan. 10:13).

DEFINING THE TERMS

Some teachers in the Body of Christ have coined new extra-biblical terms for explaining three different realms. [Authors note: “extra-biblical” simply refers to things not in the Bible. This is not the same as anti-or unbiblical] Based on Paul using the phrase “third heaven” in Second Corinthians 12:2-4, they have extrapolated that if there is a third heaven, then it would stand to reason that there must be a first and second heaven, neither of which is mentioned by name in the Bible. Theologically, this is not a wrong assumption. However, when we begin to create new extra-biblical terms, we usually scare and divide from other parts of the Body of Christ. I have chosen to use biblical language as much as possible that I may be able to bring other more timid parts of the Church into new experience with the Holy Spirit.

When people refer to the first heaven they mean what the Bible calls the *seen realm*. When the second heaven is spoken of, it is what the Bible calls the *unseen realm*, which surrounds the physical realm. The term *third heaven* is only mentioned one time in Scripture and it is referred to as an experience that had happened once in 14 years and the author could not even describe this precious experience.

I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven. Whether it was in the body or

out of the body I do not know—God knows. And I know that this man—whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, but God knows—was caught up to paradise. He heard inexpressible things, things that man is not permitted to tell (2 Corinthians 12:2-4).

Because the third heaven is only mentioned once and without description, I chose not to use this term casually. Consider that the third heaven must be something profound—in that it was indescribable and unusual—in that it happened once in 14 years. While we do have access to the heavenly realm and experiences, according to Paul the third heaven is altogether something different.

EXAMPLES OF THE UNSEEN REALM

ELISHA AND HIS SERVANT

“Go, find out where he is,” the king ordered, “so I can send men and capture him.” The report came back: “He is in Dothan.” Then he sent horses and chariots and a strong force there. They went by night and surrounded the city. When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. “Oh, my lord, what shall we do?” the servant asked. “Don’t be afraid.” the prophet answered. “Those who are with us are more than those who are with them.” And Elisha prayed, “O Lord, open his eyes so he may see.” Then the Lord opened the servant’s eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha (2 Kings 6:13-17).

In this story Elisha had been surrounded by enemy forces during the night. When the servant awoke and realized that they were surrounded, he was full of fear. Elisha, however, was calm, cool, and collected. He directed his servant not to be afraid and informed him that there were more forces on their side than the enemy had on his side.

Elisha was seeing into the unseen realm of the spirit. He prayed that his servant would be able to see as well. The servant received this impartation and was able to see what Elisha saw. My friend Harold Eberle has an interesting insight about how we see things in the spirit and how God communicates with us:

To see how spiritual dynamics relate to natural consequences, consider how the prophet Elisha and his servant became surrounded by enemy soldiers. When Elisha prayed for his servant's eyes to be opened to the spiritual world, "he saw; and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha" (2 Kings 6:17 NKJV). Knowing that God was with him, Elisha had no fear. He prayed that God would strike the enemies with blindness, and they immediately went blind for a season.

This story is enlightening concerning how the spiritual realm appears to the one who can see into that realm. God communicates through visions. He uses pictures we can relate to in order to communicate what is going on in the spiritual world.

Concerning Elisha and his servant's vision, it is difficult to say whether horses and chariots actually existed in the spiritual world or if the horses and chariots that they saw represented the power of God that was available to defend them. For us today, horses and chariots would not be a very effective representation of God's power because one modern military machine such as a tank

could defeat thousands of horses and chariots. Perhaps, then, if God wanted to reveal His power to us, He would show armies with all of the latest, most deadly equipment.

That reveals how realities in the spiritual realm are communicated to us in the natural realm. It is similar to the pictures one sees in dreams. There are true messages behind spiritual images, but the images are merely a form of communication.¹

DANIEL SEES IN THE SPIRIT REALM

Daniel lived a life full of incredible spiritual experiences. In Daniel 10, Daniel sees into the unseen realm, but the men who were with him did not share in his experience. He had recently had a vision about a coming war and was emotionally disturbed by it for several weeks. One day, as Daniel was standing on the bank of the river Tigris, he began to see into the spirit realm:

On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river, the Tigris, I looked up and there before me was a man dressed in linen, with a belt of the finest gold around his waist. His body was like chrysolite, his face like lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and his voice like the sound of a multitude. I, Daniel, was the only one who saw the vision; the men with me did not see it, but such terror overwhelmed them that they fled and hid themselves (Daniel 10:4-7).

Daniel saw, and although the men didn't, they did sense a very strong presence, so strong that they actually fled and hid. How incredible that they were standing next to Daniel one minute and suddenly had the overwhelming urge to run away and hide! The vision continues with Daniel all by himself:

So I was left alone, gazing at this great vision; I had no strength left, my face turned deathly pale and I was helpless. Then I heard him speaking, and as I listened to him, I fell into a deep sleep, my face to the ground. A hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. He said, "Daniel, you who are highly esteemed, consider carefully the words I am about to speak to you, and stand up, for I have now been sent to you." And when he said this to me, I stood up trembling (Daniel 10:8-11).

Daniel managed to stay for the vision, but he was physically overwhelmed. From the outside, this must have been interesting to watch. Here is Daniel with a group of guys, when suddenly they bolt, looking terrified. Daniel is the only one left, and he turns pale and drops to the ground. Then trembling, he rises to his feet, yet in the physical, nothing is visible to make sense of this.

THE APOSTLE JOHN

The apostle John was under religious persecution and had been exiled to the island of Patmos. He wrote that on the Lord's Day, he was in the spirit (for perspective on what "in the spirit" means, see [Chapter 14](#), "Worship in Spirit and in Truth"). Suddenly, he entered into a prophetic experience where he saw into the unseen realm.

I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and among the lampstands was someone "like a son of man," dressed in a robe reaching down to His feet and with a golden sash around His chest. His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes were like blazing fire. His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of rushing waters. In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.

When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as though dead. Then He placed His right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades" (Revelation 1:9-18).

When it says that John “fell down as though dead,” his physical body actually fell down in the physical realm. As he stood in the physical realm and watched a vision before him in the spirit realm, he was affected physically. In Revelation 1-3, John is in his physical body watching a vision with his spiritual eyes. It is not until the beginning of [chapter 4](#) that John leaves his body behind. In Revelation 4, God calls John up and out of the earth: “Come up here” (Rev. 4:1), and the experience becomes an out-of-body experience.

BALAAAM AND HIS DONKEY

This is one of the most mysterious stories in the Book of Numbers. Balaam the prophet was rebelling against the word of the Lord. He had set out on his donkey and had two of his servants traveling along with him. The Word tells us that Balaam's donkey saw into the spirit realm and saw the angel of the Lord standing in the road with a drawn sword. The donkey turned away to save itself, but Balaam, who was dull to seeing because of his disobedience, became angry with the donkey. He began to beat the donkey to go down the road. Again, the donkey saw the angel and tried to get away by pressing up against a wall, thus crushing Balaam's foot. Balaam beat the donkey again. A third time the donkey saw the angel, and this time it just sat down under Balaam. This angered him again, and again he beat the donkey.

*Balaam got up in the morning, saddled his donkey and went with the princes of Moab. But God was very angry when he went, and the angel of the Lord stood in the road to oppose him. Balaam was riding on his donkey and his two servants were with him. When **the donkey saw the angel of the Lord** standing in the road with a drawn sword in his hand, she turned off the road into a field. Balaam beat her to get her back on the road. Then the angel of the Lord stood in a narrow path between two vineyards, with walls on both sides. When **the donkey saw the angel of the Lord**, she pressed close*

*to the wall, crushing Balaam's foot against it. So he beat her again. Then the angel of the Lord moved on ahead and stood in a narrow place where there was no room to turn, either to the right or to the left. When **the donkey saw the angel of the Lord**, she lay down under Balaam, and he was angry and beat her with his staff (Numbers 22:21-27).*

This story gets really weird when God gives the donkey the momentary ability to speak. The donkey asks why Balaam is beating her, and Balaam responds that the donkey is making a fool of him. He foolishly says that if he had a sword, he would kill his talking donkey. The donkey reasons with him that she has never acted in this way, and Balaam concedes that this is true. Then suddenly the Lord opens Balaam's eyes to the spirit realm. There standing in the unseen realm is the angel that was sent to kill him. The angel says that if the donkey hadn't turned away, he would have killed Balaam and would have left the donkey alive.

*Then the Lord opened the donkey's mouth, and she said to Balaam, "What have I done to you to make you beat me these three times?" Balaam answered the donkey, "You have made a fool of me! If I had a sword in my hand, I would kill you right now." The donkey said to Balaam, "Am I not your own donkey, which you have always ridden, to this day? Have I been in the habit of doing this to you?" "No," he said. **Then the Lord opened Balaam's eyes**, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the road with his*

sword drawn. So he bowed low and fell facedown. The angel of the Lord asked him, “Why have you beaten your donkey these three times? I have come here to oppose you because your path is a reckless one before me. The donkey saw me and turned away from me these three times. If she had not turned away, I would certainly have killed you by now, but I would have spared her” (Numbers 22:28-33).

This opens up a discussion about animals and the spirit realm. Pastor Roland Buck, author of the classic book *Angels on Assignment*, shares about his dog having an awareness of the spirit realm:

Queenie, that’s my dog... a purebred Great Dane... quietly “woofed” as she pressed her wet nose against my face. The time was 2:00 A.M. I knew what was up by now. That is the way she rouses me when she becomes aware that angelic visitors are in the house.²

Perhaps Balaam’s donkey had a heightened awareness of spiritual beings because of the proximity of the anointing over time, or perhaps it is part of the nature of animals to be aware of the spirit realm.

From this sampling of Scripture we see that many Bible characters experienced and interacted with the unseen realm. As New Testament believers, we also have access and should

experience this realm in our lives.

ILLEGAL ACCESS

Many New Age leaders teach about experiences with the unseen realm. These experiences seem real, but that does not mean that they are true. In First Kings 22 there is a story of a king who had 401 prophets, 400 of whom prophesied that the king should go into battle and that he would have victory. Then one prophet declared that they would lose the battle. Both groups were prophesying, both groups seemed real, but only one of them was true. Only those who are *legally* accessing the unseen realm are having true experiences and should be listened to as those who speak the truth.

Another example is when Aaron threw down his staff and it became a snake, then Pharaoh's magicians replicated the miracle. The point is that the false and the real will look identical, except that Aaron's snake ate the magician's snakes (Exodus 7). The real difference is that only Aaron was operating with legal access into the unseen realm. To experience God's power, you must have legal access to this realm.

God the Father is the Lord of Heaven and Earth; all realms are His (see Matt. 11:25). There is only one way to be in right relationship to the Father—that is through His son, Jesus (see John 14:6). Jesus came to pay for our sin, bring us into correct relationship with the Father, and open the heavens and all the

spirit realms to us (see John 1:15; Matt. 16:19; Eph. 2:1-7; Col. 3:1-3). Jesus protects us from the evil spiritual beings that dwell in the unseen realms. Without receiving the death, resurrection, and forgiveness of Jesus, we are not in right relationship with the Father. Without right relationship, we are literally trespassing when we enter into spiritual experiences and can be easily deceived and destroyed. It is *dangerous* to operate in spiritual realms without being in right relationship with the Lord of Heaven and Earth.

If you have not yet submitted your life to Jesus, received His forgiveness for your sins, and come into right relationship with your Father God, it is time that you do. Before you go any further, pray this prayer with me in your own words right now.

Dear Jesus,

I understand that I have done things in my life that have separated me from having a relationship with You. I know that God Your Father sent You to earth to die for my mistakes. I understand that God brought You back to life, and I am asking You right now to give me forgiveness for my sins and eternal life with You in Heaven. Jesus, I ask You to come and abide within my heart and change my life. I thank You that You have provided all the spiritual blessings and gifts I will ever need.

FINAL THOUGHTS

There are a lot of opinions about whether the spirit realm is good or bad, but as we look at Scripture we find that both angels and demons operate on this plane of existence. Even Jesus appears to Daniel and John in this realm. The unseen realm is neither good nor evil, in the same way that the physical realm is neither good nor evil. It is merely a plane of existence. Just as in the physical realm, the beings that dwell there can be good or evil. To say that everything in the unseen realm [or second heaven] is demonic is not biblical and we will be cutting ourselves off from a legitimate way that God speaks to us. Since we do not live in awareness of the spirit realm on a constant basis, we must use discernment when interacting with this realm.

ACTIVATION I

Put this prayer in your own words:

Lord,

I want communication from Heaven in my life. I ask that You would open the unseen realm to me. Lord, please remove all fear from my heart—fear of the unseen and fear of spiritual encounters. Lord, I want to receive all of the spiritual blessings that You have provided for me. I make myself available to Your many forms of communication.

ACTIVATION II

This exercise may take some more time.

First, ask the Lord to bring to your mind a friend or family member.

Second, ask the Lord to show you something about or around that person in the spirit realm. This could be an angel standing by them, Jesus, a demonic presence, a fruit of the Holy Spirit, objects such as weapons or chains, a special outfit such as armor or tribal clothing, etc.

Third, ask the Lord to give you insight into what you are seeing and how this translates into a word of encouragement for this individual.

Fourth, write down what you saw and what it means as if you were writing a letter to this person.

We will come back to this letter at the end of [Chapter 8](#), “Discerning of Spirits.”

ENDNOTES

1. Harold Eberle, *Victorious Eschatology* (Yakima, WA, Worldcast Pub., 2006), 156-157.
2. Charles and Frances Hunter, with Roland Buck, *Angels on Assignment* (Houston, TX: Hunter Books, 1979).

CHAPTER 7

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE ANGELIC REALM

THERE HAVE BEEN literally hundreds of books written about angels. I have read dozens of them. My goal in writing this book has been to provide fresh perspective on age-old truths. Rather than addressing basic questions that can be answered by reading almost any book on the topic, (e.g., What do angels look like? How many angels are there? Are there bad angels?), I will focus in this chapter on some of the more difficult, unusual, and even controversial questions about the angelic.

Q: Do You See Angels All the Time?

A: As with all gifts of the Holy Spirit, we must step out in faith to activate the gift. For example, while the Holy Spirit will sometimes move sovereignly to heal someone, most of the time we must engage our faith. Jesus often commanded an act of obedience in order to activate faith for healing. For example, He said, “Go and show yourself to the priest,” “Go wash the mud from your eyes,” or “Pick up your bed and walk.” In each case, physical healing occurred after the person responded in faith by obeying the

command.

When the Holy Spirit gives a prophetic word, we must take part by cooperating with the Spirit and delivering the word. When you act in faith, you are stepping over into the things of the Kingdom realm—healing, prophecy, miracles, discerning of spirits, and so on. I don't see in the spirit realm all the time, but I can activate my faith, and I know that the Holy Spirit will meet my faith, and the gift of discerning of spirits will operate through me.

Q: Do You See Angels Like You See Other People?

A: When I am seeing angels, I see them in a manner similar to Elisha, Balaam, or Balaam's donkey. I see them superimposed over the natural realm. I do not see them as clearly as a person in the flesh, but my spirit eyes see them.

As we studied in the chapter on the spirit realm, there is scriptural precedent for one individual seeing an angelic being while the others standing by do not.

Q: Does Seeing in the Spirit Realm Mean That One Sees the Demonic as Well?

A: Yes, once your eyes are open, and you are able to see, you should be able to discern the spiritual roots of diseases, perhaps things in a person's past, or even at times the presence of demonic spirits. This is a good thing, because as we walk in the authority of

Christ and the demonic shows up in our path, we can deal with it and push the Kingdom of God forward.

I have talked with many people who started seeing the dark side before they began to see the angels and the light side. I don't have an explanation for this, but I have a few speculative theories.

First, entertainment in our culture is full of horror and violence. This has polluted the spirit eyes of many and needs to be repented of so that cleansing can be released.

Second, a familiar spirit might be hanging around a family or individual because of a generational curse. This can be broken off by the blood of Jesus.

Third, satan is fully resisting the gift of discerning of spirits. If he can scare a person away from using his or her gift, then he has succeeded. As you continue to mature and press forward in your gifting, the other realms of discernment will begin to open up as well.

Q: Are There Female Angels?

A: There is no reference to an angel being a female in Scripture. This is an important point because the New Age movement has brought so much confusion into the Church in the Western World. Angels are most commonly portrayed as females—closely followed by a fat baby cherub with a bow and arrow—

both of which are unscriptural.

There are female spiritual beings in Scripture, such as those mentioned in Zechariah 5:5-11. These verses are commonly used to teach that there are female angels. But if we study this passage closely, these beings are never referred to as angels.

Then the angel who was speaking to me came forward and said to me, "Look up and see what this is that is appearing." I asked, "What is it?" He replied, "It is a measuring basket." And he added, "This is the iniquity of the people throughout the land." Then the cover of lead was raised, and there in the basket sat a woman! He said, "This is wickedness," and he pushed her back into the basket and pushed the lead cover down over its mouth. Then I looked up—and there before me were two women, with wind in their wings! They had wings like those of a stork, and they lifted up the basket between heaven and earth. "Where are they taking the basket?" I asked the angel who was speaking to me. He replied, "To the country of Babylonia to build a house for it. When it is ready, the basket will be set there in its place" (Zechariah 5:5-11).

The angel standing next to Zechariah in his vision is referred to as masculine. Then he sees two women with wings like those of a stork appear and fly away.

The first wrong assumption is that angels commonly have

wings; therefore, these must be angels. In the Bible, seraphim (see Isa. 6:2) and cherubim (see Ezek. 10:8) are clearly described as having wings, but they are a different class of spiritual beings, not angels. Angels are a specific class and order of being—not to be confused with other spiritual beings such as cherubim, seraphim, the four living creatures (see Rev. 4:8), and the seven spirits of God (see Isa. 11; Rev. 4:5). If you look over the many references to angels in the Bible, you will find that the majority of them appear looking like men (not with wings). Hebrews 13:2 says, “*Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it.*” If all angels had big Hollywood wings, then this verse would not make sense.

An interesting detail is that Zechariah says that the wings were like those of a stork. Nowhere else in the Bible does it say that angels have wings like a stork. If Zechariah were trying to say that these two women were angels, he could have said that they had wings like an angel. Instead he chose to describe them as something completely unique to his vision. As an additional note, God had told the Israelites that the stork was an unclean and detestable animal, so this vision was a negative picture (see Lev. 11:19).

Could it be that Zechariah was confused—perhaps he had never seen an angel, or he couldn’t tell that they were female angels? This is an invalid assertion because he is standing next to an angel during the encounter. When looking at the whole of his book,

Zechariah is not ignorant of the angelic realm. Zechariah could have said that two female angels came in a vision, but instead he described what he actually saw in this interesting vision—that is, two women with wings like those of a stork.

There is no direct reference to an angel being represented in feminine form in the Bible, but there are many references to feminine spirit beings. Examples include the two women in Zechariah 5, the Jezebel spirit in Revelation 2, the woman and the dragon in Revelation 12, the whore of Babylon in Revelation 17, and the spirit of wisdom, which is referred to in the feminine throughout the Book of Proverbs (see Prov. 1:20-33; 4:5-9; 8; 9).

Q: Do Angels Have Gender?

A: Let's look at a passage that is commonly used to say that angels are without gender:

That same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Him with a question. *“Teacher,” they said, “Moses told us that if a man dies without having children, his brother must marry the widow and have children for him. Now there were seven brothers among us. The first one married and died, and since he had no children, he left his wife to his brother. The same thing happened to the second and third brother, right on down to the seventh. Finally, the woman died. Now then, at the resurrection, whose wife will*

she be of the seven, since all of them were married to her?"

*Jesus replied, "You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God. **At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven.** But about the resurrection of the dead—have you not read what God said to you, I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not the God of the dead but of the living." When the crowds heard this, they were astonished at His teaching (Matthew 22:30-33).*

Many have stretched this verse to mean that angels are without gender because they neither marry nor are given in marriage. What is this verse really saying? When Jesus says that people will be like the angels in heaven at the resurrection, how does this have anything to do with gender? If we are to believe that angels are genderless and we are going to be like them, then once we are resurrected will we also be genderless? Obviously not!

Consider that every single reference out of the hundreds in Scripture always refer to angels as masculine. To conclude that angels are genderless and that is why they don't marry is like saying that people with the gift of celibacy (see 1 Cor. 7:7) are genderless and that is why they don't get married. Some have gone so far as to assume that since angels do not reproduce, they must

be without gender. The truth is, angels are not a race, they are individual creations and that is why they do not reproduce.

Suppose we were to stretch the meaning the other way and say that since every reference in Scripture shows that all angels are masculine, if we are to be like them, then all women will turn into men at the resurrection. Surely no one would argue this as a valid point.

When Jesus says that we will be like the angels, the statement may have more obvious implications, such as having eternal life, glorified bodies, and sinless living. Perhaps Jesus was actually answering their question, which had nothing to do with the gender of angels. He might have been saying that we will live in the heavenly realm like the angels and not have the difficulties and complications of this earthly life, such as death, marriage, and remarriage.

Q: What Is a Typical Physical Response to an Angelic Encounter?

A: I believe that everyone reacts differently. I would like to quote from one of my favorite books on angels, *Angels, Elect and Evil* by Fred Dickason:

When angels do appear, their presence produces various effects upon men. No special effect is noted upon Joseph except the allaying of his human concern about Mary and his

obedience to the revealed will of God (see Matt. 1:18-25).

Mental and emotional agitation came upon Mary when Gabriel announced to her the news of the virgin birth of Christ. Nevertheless, she conversed with him and accepted his message as from God (see Luke 1:29, 34, 38). Zacharias was troubled and gripped by fear when an angel appeared to him in the temple (see Luke 1:12). The shepherds to whom the angelic messenger announced the birth of Christ were very much afraid (see Luke 2:9) at first, yet they rationally investigated the news and marveled at the message (see Luke 2:15-18).

Mental and physical weakness, sometimes accompanied by complete lack of composure, results from angels' presence. Consider the Roman guards who saw the angel who rolled back the stone from Christ's tomb. They trembled from fear and became as dead (see Matt. 28:4). When Daniel saw an unusual manlike creature of brilliant appearance, he was left without strength and comeliness (see Dan. 10:8). Even those who did not see the vision trembled greatly. Strange sensations caused them to flee from Daniel's presence with fear. Animals may in the will of God see angels and so hesitate or fall, as did Balaam's donkey (see Num. 22:26-28, 31).¹

Q: Why Didn't Jesus Die for the Sins of Fallen Angels?

A: Many theologians have suggested that the main difference between humans and angels is that angels are not a race of beings. Humans are a race of beings; we reproduce, we die, and we have a bloodstream in our body. When Jesus came and died for us, Philippians 2 tells us that Jesus became a part of the human race. Romans 5 speaks of how Jesus established a new bloodstream. On the earth now, there are two races, those who are in the bloodline of Adam, the fallen first man, and those who are in the bloodline of the second Adam, Jesus Christ (see 1 Cor. 15:44-49). That is why we are new creatures and why Second Peter 1:4 speaks of us being partakers of the divine nature. As a race, Jesus could die once for all (see Heb. 10:10) and establish a new race.

Angels, however, are each an individual creation. They are not a blood line (they may not even have blood), and they don't reproduce. If Jesus were to die for their sins, He would have to die for each fallen angel individually, over and over again, perhaps millions of times to be able to die and resurrect for each one.

Q: Is It Imbalanced to Focus So Much on Angels?

A: I have been writing this book for many years, and I have felt odd at times writing so much about the spirit realm and angels. In fact, there has even been an outcry in certain church circles against the prophetic movement and its focused teaching on the

angelic realm. I have sought the Lord about if we are in imbalance by talking about and giving focus to angels. The response I received from the Lord was surprising.

In essence, the Lord showed me that the root issue of those who have a problem with talking about angels and the spirit realm is that they do not accurately understand what a Christian is. The Lord took me to Hebrews 1.

*So He became as much superior to the angels as the name He has inherited is superior to theirs. For to which of the angels did God ever say, “**You are My Son; today I have become Your Father?**” Or again, “**I will be His Father, and He will be My Son?**” And again, when God brings His firstborn into the world, He says, “**Let all God’s angels worship Him.**” In speaking of the angels He says, “**He makes His angels winds, His servants flames of fire.**” But about the Son He says, “**Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever, and righteousness will be the scepter of Your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, Your God, has set You above Your companions by anointing You with the oil of joy.**” ...To which of the angels did God ever say, “**Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet**”? Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation? (Hebrews 1:4-14).*

The Church understands that Jesus is greater and higher than the angels, but there has been confusion as to whether we are higher than the angels or vice versa. The answer is simple: If you are in Christ, then you are higher than the angels. We are to be “*hid with Christ in God*” (see Col. 3:3), and if we abide in Him, then He will abide in us (see John 15:4). Christ is higher than the angels, and we are in Him; thus, we are in a higher place than the angels.

Several other passages shed light on the concept that angels are lower than believers. The apostle Paul tells us that we are going to judge angels, “*Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life!*” (1 Cor. 6:3). The Book of Hebrews tells us that angels have been sent forth to serve believers, “*Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?*” (Heb 1:14). This being the case, consider the words of Jesus: “*No servant is greater than his master*” (John 15:20). Clearly, this is just a sampling of many verses that show that in the Kingdom of Heaven, angels are not in a higher position than a believer. If we are put off by trying to understand beings like angels who occupy a lower place, then we clearly have not grasped the Kingdom that we are a part of.

Christians need to stop being so impressed by those claiming to have seen an angel and realize that every time we look at a fellow believer, we are looking at a being with a divine nature (see 2 Pet. 1:4). A Christian is of much greater stature than any angel. When I am looking at a fellow believer, I am literally looking at the

only type of being that has ever been given the very *mind of Christ* (1 Cor. 2:16). In fact, Scripture says that we have been given such a high level of insight into the Kingdom of Heaven that, “...*even angels long to look into these things*” (1 Peter 1:12). A believer simultaneously dwells in three worlds because they exist in the physical realm, the spiritual realm, and the heavenly realms with Christ (see Eph. 2:6).

Consider this: In the beginning only God existed; then at some point, He created the angels. This was God’s first act of creation. Then God created earth and its inhabitants: This was God’s second act of creation. The third and most recent act of creation in all of eternity past was when through Christ’s bloodline God created new creatures in Christ Jesus (see 2 Cor. 5:17). You, as a new creature in Christ, are literally the most recent creation God has made in all of history, and we are the only new thing on this old planet. We have been left on this planet as ambassadors, priests, kings, and oracles to mold and transform this planet until God comes back and performs His fourth and final act of creation, giving us a new Heaven and a new earth that is more suitable for such amazing new creatures to inhabit with Him eternally.

Until our perspective shifts to seeing ourselves and each other properly through God’s eyes, we will still be overly impressed with those who have seen angels and operate in the spirit realm. The spirit realm needs to be demystified and understood by the average Christian, keeping in mind that the

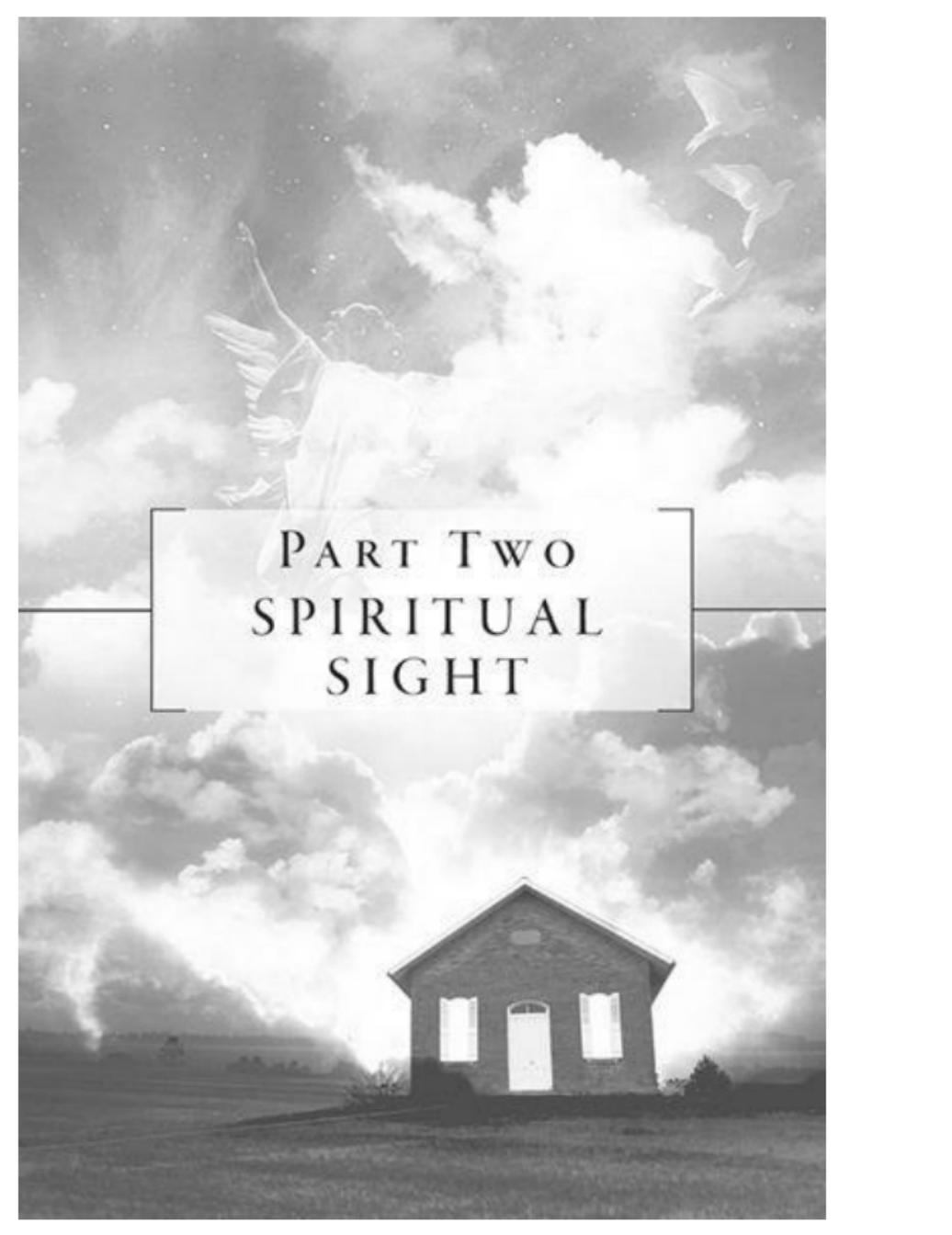
average Christian is much more amazing than we have been made to believe.

A FINAL WORD

In this [chapter I](#) have responded to eight very difficult and interesting questions regarding the angelic. I may have caused more questions to come to mind as you read this chapter. My goal was not to answer every question about angels; this book is not an in-depth study of angels. I just wanted to get you, the reader, curious and thinking more about this subject. It is fine if you disagree with my answers, I have tried to answer not from a personal preference or bias; my desire is to base my answers upon a biblical foundation. If you would like to know more of what the Bible teaches about angels, I would highly recommend above all the others, *Angels, Elect and Evil* by Fred Dickason.

ENDNOTES

1. C. Fred Dickason, *Angels, Elect and Evil* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1975), 37.



PART TWO
SPIRITUAL
SIGHT

CHAPTER 8

DISCERNING OF SPIRITS

DISCERNING OF SPIRITS is the most misunderstood of all the spiritual gifts. Because of the confusion surrounding this gift, clear biblical teaching on discerning of spirits would be beneficial. The gift of discerning of spirits and the natural ability of discernment are not the same thing. There are many people who have a high level of sensitivity in the natural or emotional realm. This can even be taught through a heightened self-awareness to your emotional state, as explained by Daniel Goleman in his groundbreaking work, *Emotional Intelligence*.¹

The main difference is that one of the main attributes of the nine spiritual gifts listed in First Corinthians 12 is that they are supernatural in nature. For example, a “word of knowledge” is something supernatural, not something that could be attained through natural means. The same is true of the supernatural gift of healing; it supersedes the laws of the natural world. This applies to all nine of the gifts, but our focus here is on the gift of discerning of spirits.

In our culture, we have accepted that someone can be very

discerning, but this is a natural intuitive ability. The spiritual gift in First Corinthians 12 is something unique. There is a correlation between natural and supernatural discernment in that both gifts help to inform an individual what is in the atmosphere or environment surrounding them. Natural discernment informs what is in the natural, emotional, or interpersonal realm, whereas supernatural discernment informs what is in the spiritual realm.

Supernatural discernment typically divides that information into four different areas: (1) the working of the Holy Spirit, (2) the working of the demonic, (3) the working of the human spirit, and (4) the working of heavenly beings.

Another reason that the gift of discerning of spirits has been misunderstood is that the gift has been abused. Many believe that discerning of spirits is the ability to know another person's secret sin and have used it as justification for harboring attitudes of suspicion, criticism, and accusation. Good-hearted people don't want to operate in this distorted version of discerning of spirits.

I have heard major church leaders comment that if they had to choose to remove one of the nine gifts of the Spirit, they "would absolutely choose to remove the gift of discerning of spirits because no other gift has singlehandedly caused as much damage to the Body of Christ." That comment only makes sense in light of the misuse of this gift. Let's look closer at what the gift of discerning of spirits truly is.

THREE ROOT WORDS

In the Bible the words *judgment* and *discernment* can be used synonymously at times. There are actually three root words in the Greek for the word *judgment*.² This gives us a strong insight into the nature of discernment.

The first root word in the Greek is *anakrino*. In *Vine's Dictionary*, the base meaning of this word is the ability to distinguish. We should always operate under this type of discernment.

The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned [anakrino] (1 Corinthians 2:14).

The second root word in Greek is *dokimazo*, the base meaning of which is to test or prove.

Hypocrites! You can discern [dokimazo] the face of the sky and of the earth, but how is it you do not discern [dokimazo] this time? (Luke 12:56 NKJV).

This use of discernment is sometimes appropriate as a

Christian. For example we are told to test the spirits (see 1 John 4:1) or judge our prophecies (see 1 Thess. 5:21).

The third root word for judgment in Greek is *krino*, which actually means to condemn. This is never the role of a Christian! We should distinguish good from evil, and we should even test and prove at times, but condemnation is off limits for the believer.

Do not judge [krino], or you too will be judged [krino]. For in the same way you judge [krino] others, you will be judged [krino], and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you (Matthew 7:1-2).

From these three root words for judgment, we learn that there are two types of judgment that are good and one that is not. As we move in discernment, we need to remember that Jesus said that we are to judge with *righteous* judgment.

Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment (John 7:24).

THE FOUR CATEGORIES

Because of a lack of biblical teaching, the gift of discerning of spirits has been misunderstood in the Church to be criticism, suspicion, and condemnation. The truth is it is a supernatural gift from the Holy Spirit to be operated through love. There are four types of spirits you can discern: The Holy Spirit, heavenly spirits, the human spirit, and demonic spirits. Discerning of spirits helps us know which of these four spirits we are interacting with.

1. THE HOLY SPIRIT

During the mass confusion on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2), Peter, having discerning of spirits in operation, stood in front of the crowd and declared that what was happening was a move of the Holy Spirit. In Acts 8, the church sent Peter and John to go check out Philip's conversion of Samaritans. It required discernment on the part of Peter to acknowledge that what was happening with Philip was the work of the Holy Spirit. It took obedience and discernment to bring salvation and baptism in the Holy Spirit to the house of Cornelius. When God is showing you something that is outside your comfort zone, it usually requires the operation of discerning of spirits to accept new truth.

John the Baptist also discerned the presence of the Holy Spirit before baptizing Jesus:

Then John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on Him. I would not have known Him, except that the One who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is He who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God." (John 1:32-34).

Another example of discerning the Holy Spirit comes from

my wife, Karen Welton:

One night, a group of seven or eight of my friends and I got together at one of our homes. We originally intended to play board games, but I felt like doing something different. I had a lingering desire to invite the presence of God into the room, so I suggested we put on some worship music instead. I could feel the atmosphere was pregnant with a potential visitation. My friend put on some worship, and the presence of the Lord filled his living room. We found ourselves face down on the floor worshipping Jesus.

In the spirit, I saw water filling up the room. It started as only a couple inches deep as we all lay on the floor, but the water grew deeper as we worshipped. I was aware of the presence of angels in the room, seven in total. In the center of the room, I sensed something different. I thought, "There must be a large angel standing there because I sense something powerful swirling around in the middle." I tried to discern what kind of angel could be this powerful, and why was it different from all the others? I realized it wasn't an angel at all, it was a vortex of water about 4 or 5 feet wide swirling around powerfully and overflowing from the top and filling the room. I was seeing the manifest presence of the Holy Spirit.

By now the water had reached shoulder level, and I moved

to the center of the vortex and laid face down. Within ten minutes, without me saying anything, three others moved and laid down in the center of the room with me. The water grew deeper as the power source overflowed, filling the room with more water. God was literally pouring out His Spirit on us!

At this point the water was higher than our heads. I saw one of my friends stand up in the middle of the room and place a flattened hand at the top of where I saw the water level in the spirit, just over his head. I looked at him incredulously and said, “That’s exactly where the water level is! You see the vortex of water, too?” No one had said anything this whole time, and I didn’t know if anyone else had seen the water filling the room in the spirit realm.

My friend said, “There is a pillar of water right here, and it’s this high; on top of the pillar of water, it turns into a pillar of fire coming down from the ceiling. If you put your hand right here, you can feel a change in pressure.” He held his hand flat in the air, bouncing it a little with the water. I knew about the large pillar of water, but had not realized there was a pillar of fire on top.

Many of us put our hands at the same level, and we all felt a slight change in pressure where the pillar of water turned into a pillar of fire.”

My friend Ben Valence shares one of his experiences of discerning the presence of the Holy Spirit:

It was like any other week at youth group, when, during worship, the Lord asked me to do something. As I pressed in, the Lord told me I was holding a bucket and to go around and pour something over everyone. Feeling kind of silly, I went over to Jon and told him what the Lord had told me, and he just said to do it. I went around the whole church pouring something over people, thinking that I must look crazy.

When I got back to Jon, I asked what he was seeing. I was amazed when he told me that there were two big angels on stage and that there was water running over the stage down onto the whole sanctuary. The water was mixed with oil, and being only ankle deep even the people lying on the ground praising the Lord were not fully submersed in it. I was going around with the bucket actually scooping up this water and oil and washing it over everyone there. Even though I looked silly in the physical, I was doing something in the spirit realm that was much more profound. All that the Lord told me was that I had a bucket, but I believed and obeyed, and after hearing what was going on the spirit realm, I am so glad I followed.

2. HEAVENLY SPIRITS

The Bible is full of references to angels and other heavenly creatures. Some of the clearest examples of discernment functioning would include Elisha seeing the heavenly host while his servant did not (see 2 Kings 6), or Balaam's donkey seeing the angel in the road three times before Balaam's eyes were opened (see Numbers 22). When this operation of discernment is taking place, one individual may be aware of the presence of the heavenly spirit, while others around are not aware. This happened several times in the Word, such as when Jesus was being spoken to by the Father and those around only heard thunder (see John 12:28-29). Another example is when Jesus knocked Paul off his donkey, and the soldiers with Paul couldn't tell what was happening (see Acts 9:7).

One day in autumn I was driving home from work when I saw a large angel dressed in purple appear very abruptly in the road ahead of me. He had a large sword, which he gripped with both hands and pointed at me. I heard him say to me in my spirit, "Slow down now!" This was not a request, but rather, a command. As soon as I saw him in purple, I thought to myself, "Purple is a royal color, so this must be important." I slowed down immediately. As I arrived at the point where he had been standing, there was a sharp turn that I was familiar with. The only difference was that the car that had been ahead of me had completely stopped on the other side of the blind corner. If I had not slowed down, I

would have plowed into his car at 40 to 50 miles per hour, most certainly killing the passengers of the other car and, likely, myself as well.

EQUIPPING ANGELS

Another time around the Christmas of 2002, I attended a conference with about 6,000 youth in Niagara Falls, New York. During worship I began to see something I had never seen. In the center of the packed-out civic center, I saw four large angels, easily 100 or more feet tall. They each had a branding iron in their hand. At first, I could not see what the brand said, but then they began to use the brand on specific individuals. They placed the branding iron across the chest of a person and left a label branded on them. I saw words like *sanctified*, *Holy unto the Lord*, *nazarite*, and *prophet to the nations*. I could see this brand on different individuals for the remainder of the conference. On rare occasions I come across other individuals who have this brand on their chest. Not that they were in this specific meeting, but I believe that this is occurring at many times and places as a commissioning—similar to Isaiah 6, when the angel consecrated Isaiah with coal from the fire.

Karen and I were attending a conference a couple of years ago in Columbus, Ohio. There were several well-known prophetic ministers there as speakers. As one of them finished his message and moved into ministry time, I saw something very unusual. The minister said that God was going to commission fivefold ministers that night. When he said this, a large angel appeared near the front of the sanctuary. This 15-to 20-foot-tall angel had the word

equipping written across his chest. He was standing very properly with cloths draped over his arm, which he held in front of him, reminiscent of a waiter at a fancy restaurant. The minister had the whole congregation line up and come to the front to have hands laid on them. As he did this, the “equipping” angel would lay one of his cloths over the shoulders of specific individuals. Once the cloth was laid on a person, I was able to read it. The cloths read *apostle*, *prophet*, *evangelist*, *pastor*, or *teacher*. The Lord gave me understanding that these were mantles He was placing on His leaders for the service of equipping the Church.

3. THE HUMAN SPIRIT

The Book of Acts contains many clear examples of this operation of discernment. For example, Peter confronts Simon the sorcerer about his evil heart motivations, Peter confronts Ananias and Sapphira about their lying, and Paul confronts the sorcerer Elymas for his evil heart. In other books, we find Paul confronting Peter about his hypocrisy, Jesus speaking of Nathanael's nature when first meeting him, and the many times that Jesus perceived the thoughts of others. These are all clear examples of discerning of spirits operating to discern the state of the human soul or spirit.

On one occasion, when I was praying for the sick, I saw something unique about the woman I was about to pray for. Before she told me what illness she was suffering with, I saw spears stuck in her from all directions in the spirit realm. They were about ten feet long and literally stuck out of her in every direction. I got the sense that she was okay when she didn't move, but that any person coming close to her would cause pain by unintentionally moving the spears in the unseen realm.

The woman told me she had anxiety, depression, chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia, Epstein Barr virus, and many other similar ailments. I described to her what I had seen in the spirit, and she said that what I saw perfectly described her. She literally did not want hands laid on her when I prayed for her because it would

cause her pain.

Some of the spears had writing on them that explained what they were and how they had arrived there (such as hate, disappointment, and fear). We spent some time forgiving individuals who had hurt her, releasing word curses, and dealing with many heart issues. As we processed these issues, the spears were being removed in the spirit. By the time we finished that night, she was able to give me a big hug without pain. I later received an e-mail from the group leader testifying that this individual has received a tremendous breakthrough in her health.

Consider how many times the Church has read the following passage and yet we have missed a big clue into discernment. “*In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one*” (Eph. 6:16). The evil one is shooting spiritual, not literal, arrows at believers. I often see believers riddled with arrows from the evil one; we need to discern in this realm so that we can bring healing to one another.

The Lord gave me an insight into why I see so many swords, spears, and other weapons stuck into people in the spirit. We see in Ephesians 6:17 that when words are in the hands of the Holy Spirit, those words are the sword of the Holy Spirit: “...*the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*”

Simply stated—in the spirit, words equal swords—so with

our mouths we also wield swords. We can use our words with the Holy Spirit as a scalpel to bring healing and restoration into the lives of others, or we can use words in a destructive manner that spiritually stabs and injures others. *“Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing”* (Prov. 12:18).

I commonly see objects stuck in individuals that represent emotional wounds and words that have been released against them. Often, these are blocking an individual's ability to receive a physical healing they need. Forgiveness is often all that is needed. Other times, the words that have been spoken against them need to be renounced, rejected, or condemned (see Isa. 54:17). This is one way that discerning of spirits can operate to bring emotional and physical healing.

Another example of discerning the human spirit comes from my friend Ben Valence.

I have had back problems for over five years. Every six months to a year, I would blow out my back, and the pain was so intense that I would have to take a month off from work. It hurt so bad I could barely make it out of bed even with help. In addition to the back problems, I was getting random fevers and other sicknesses. I finally went to the doctor, but he could not find a cause for the problems. It got to the point where I was getting fevers once a week and losing sleep. One night we were at Jon's house having a time of worship and prayer. Jon then led us in a

time of activation, praying over each of us. As I was standing in the middle with my eyes closed, everyone else stood behind me saying, "It's right here; do you feel it? As they were saying this, I could feel something piercing my back and going through my chest to my stomach. I could feel it being poked in and out, and it hurt badly. I told them to stop and asked what they were doing, because it hurt. They pointed out that they were seeing something in the air behind my back. When Jon put his hand in the air and pressed down on this invisible object, I could feel him touching something that I could not see with my physical eyes, but could definitely feel in the natural, piercing my flesh. After asking the Lord what caused this item, which seemed to be a pipe or sword, we stopped and prayed. Then Jon grabbed the sword (in the unseen realm) and slowly pulled it out of my back. As he pulled, I felt the blade slide through my chest and then through my back. After he removed the item from my back, he prayed over me again. As soon as the blade was gone I felt a relief wash over my body and a peace flood my senses. Waking up the next morning, I could not believe how good I felt. Since that night the fevers and all other sicknesses have left me, but best of all, I no longer have any problems with my back. God is so good. My back has been healed now since 2005.

IS THE HUMAN SOUL/SPIRIT ESSENTIALLY GOOD OR BAD?

There is a teaching in the Church that has caused much confusion as to how we view the human spirit/soul. This teaching says that the spirit of a believer is perfected, but the soul and body of a believer is “fleshly.” This stems from the belief that the physical world is evil and only spiritual things are good. Biblically, there are two fundamental flaws in believing that the human spirit is always good and that the soul is always bad.

First of all, the Bible states that the spirit of a believer can still be defiled after salvation. *Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God* (2 Cor. 7:1 NASB). This contradicts the idea that the spirit of a believer is already perfected.

Second, the Lord never condemned the human soul as an evil thing. In fact, He made the human soul before the fall of mankind. Adam and Eve both had souls and it was a good thing. The human soul is not inherently evil or it would not have existed in Eden.

When Hebrews 4:12 says that the Word of God divides the soul and the spirit, it is not saying that the Word divides the soul *from* the spirit as if one is good and one is bad. The Word divides

through *both* the soul and the spirit. Many have taught that the “flesh” is composed of the soul and body. This puts the spirit in a battle against the soul and body; this is a division that God never intended.

What, then, is the flesh? The *flesh* is the carnal nature of the spirit, soul, or body. Imagine three circles in a row representing the body, soul, and spirit. Under the previous understanding, the sword of the Word is vertically dividing the soul and body *from* the spirit. The correct understanding is that the sword is horizontally piercing *through* all three circles at the same time. The three half circles *below* the sword form the “flesh,” whereas the three half circles *above* the sword represent the godly walk of the spirit.

In practical application, when we discern the human spirit/soul, we may discern the good things about someone that reside in the part above the sword, or the Lord may show us the negative things that are below the sword in their “flesh.” Discerning in the area of the human spirit/soul can acquire either good or bad information in the spirit realm.

4. DEMONIC SPIRITS

There are many examples of discerning of spirits in operation throughout the Gospels, especially if we look more closely at the healing miracles of Jesus. For example, consider this story again closely:

And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no way raise herself up. But when Jesus saw her, He called her to Him and said to her, "Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity." And He laid His hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God (Luke 13:11-13 NKJV).

In the physical realm, the only thing that could be known was that the woman was bent over and that she had been in that condition for 18 years. With the gift of discerning of spirits in operation, Jesus identified the root cause as *a spirit of infirmity*. So often, the operation of discerning of spirits is overlooked, but it is in clear use all throughout the Word.

A HAUNTED BATHROOM

One of the weeks that I was in Brazil in 2002, our team was staying in a very nice four-star hotel. The only problem was that my bathroom was haunted. Seriously, the bedroom was fine I slept fine and I had no nightmares. But when I was in the shower, something odd began to happen. The shower was a four-wall glass shower stall. I had a general creepy feel about the bathroom from the beginning, but it was not until I turned on the water that things escalated. When I stepped into the shower and turned on the water, in the natural there was nothing out of the ordinary, but my spiritual sight saw the water as blood. Instead of seeing water splash off the glass walls, I was seeing blood splashing on the glass and running down. This was absolutely terrifying. I had the sense that someone had been stabbed to death in this shower stall. I told my roommate; we prayed over the bathroom all week, and by the end of the week, the feelings and sight had subsided considerably. This was one of my very first encounters like this, so although I did not have a full breakthrough victory, I did learn a lot that week. In the end, I do not know whether someone had actually been killed there or if the spirit of fear was harassing us.

Another example of discernment and the demonic realm comes from my friend Ben Valence:

A group of us had gathered at Jon's house for a night of

prayer and worship when the Lord tugged on my heart to come outside. Soon after stepping out the door, the Lord told me to take off my shoes and socks and go for a walk. I found it a little weird, but I followed his instructions. I was amazed to find myself feeling and sensing what was going on in the spirit at every house I passed. It is hard for me to explain what I mean; it was like I was feeling with my feet instead of my hands, and it was amazing. Even though it was cold outside, I could feel heat rushing through my toes and up my legs at houses where the Holy Spirit was moving. As I pressed on, the feelings got more intense until finally I came to a bridge. The bridge crossed over to the east side of town, and after passing over the bridge I could feel the atmosphere change for the worse. I not only felt the demonic, but I could even hear them sneering and hissing. I turned and ran all the way back to Jon's house. It was a very intense experience that is engraved into my memory forever.

WHAT DISCERNING OF SPIRITS IS NOT: IT IS NOT THE GIFT OF CRITICISM

Many people claim no responsibility for their criticism of others, under the guise of saying that they “discern such and such.” The truth is that we are always responsible for our words because *“from the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks”* (Matt. 12:34). If we are gossiping, backbiting, dishonoring, or smearing anyone, we need to stop and repent. Be careful not to make discerning of spirits an ugly thing to others by misrepresenting it in this way. Typically, when criticism and complaining about others is taking place, discernment is not in action. Where there is a lack of prayer, complaining will fill that void.

IT IS NOT THE GIFT OF SUSPICION

Whether out of emotional wounds or a bad past experience with an individual, we can easily slip into suspicion. First Corinthians 13:5 says, “*Love keeps no record of wrongs.*” Most often, suspicion is built on a record of some sort, whether from firsthand experience or secondhand gossip from someone else. If we are going to look at people through Jesus’ eyes, then we can’t be carrying a record of wrongs and suspecting wrong of others. Please—for your own sake and for clear discernment, forgive the record and repent for having held it.

IT IS NOT THE GIFT OF MANIPULATION

This is a question of motives. When someone says, “I discern that you should such and such,” it carries more weight than if someone just gives you his or her opinion. If they are not really listening to the Holy Spirit and speaking out of discernment, then they are actually using the Lord’s name in vain. My definition of using the Lord’s name in vain is putting the weight of “*God said*” behind anything He didn’t actually say.

This also happens frequently with the gift of prophecy. Unfortunately, people who don’t feel that they will be listened to will sometimes make it seem like the Lord gave them a “word” or *discernment*. This is dangerous ground to be on. These gifts are not to be used to control or manipulate others. The gifts are to be used to build up the Church (1 Cor. 12:7) not to tear it down.

IT IS NOT THE GIFT OF CONDEMNATION

Romans 8:1 says, “*There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.*” I would say that since there is no condemnation for us, then we should have none in us to give to others. We are not carriers of condemnation—we see the world through Jesus’ eyes and He is the one who said that He did not come to condemn the world. “*For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him*” (John 3:17). It is never the job of a Christian to condemn.

IT IS NOT “ONLY A DELIVERANCE TOOL”

This is a common misunderstanding. Many in the Church have been taught to relegate the gift of discerning of spirits to deliverance ministry only. I believe that this has caused the gift to be minimized and ignored.

The truth is that this gift picks up on four different categories of spirits, only one of them being the demonic. We are in great need of this gift in all four areas, and to say that it only relates to deliverance is wasteful.

What if I truly discern something negative about someone?

It is true that a small percentage of discerning of spirits will discern the sinful or negative parts of other individuals. We must properly process this information. In no way should this information turn into slander. The only reason the Holy Spirit is entrusting it to you is so that you can either pray on their behalf or bring them into healing (Gal. 6:1-2). The best example of this is in the story of Jesus speaking to the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4. He did not bring condemnation, just pure love. He spoke directly to *her*. He in no way slandered her to others.

He told her, “Go, call your husband and come back” “I have no husband,” she replied. Jesus said to her, “You are right when you say you have no husband. The fact is, you have

had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true.” “Sir,” the woman said, “I can see that you are a prophet” (John 4:16-19).

FIVE FILTERS

How do we work with our discernment to determine the good from the bad? To answer that question, we will look at five filters that can help us understand what our discernment is telling us.

1. AGREEMENT WITH SCRIPTURE

Since there are so many false teachings, personal opinions, and just plain bad theologies that exist, how do we know what is right from what is wrong? The Bible is immovable, unchanging truth, and everything else has to be compared against the Word. No matter what anyone else teaches, we have the more accurate Word of God according to Second Peter 1:19, quoting Psalm 12:6:

And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

“And the words of the LORD are flawless, like silver refined in a furnace of clay, purified seven times.”

2. OUTWARD FRUIT OF THE SOURCE

Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles? (Matt. 7:15-16).

If the fruit is the same in nature as the fruit of the Spirit, then perhaps God is the source. Galatians 5:22-23 tells us the nature of God's fruit: "But *the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law.*"

3. THE ANOINTING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, WHICH WILL GUIDE US TOWARD THE TRUTH.

But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth....I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to lead you astray. As for you, the anointing you received from Him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as His anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit—just as it has taught you, remain in Him. (1 John 2:20, 26-27).

These verses could be confused as a contradiction of Ephesians 4:11-13, where Paul set in place the role of a teacher, but this is just not the case.

In practical terms, if two teachers who are equally equipped to handle the Word are teaching two opposite views, the anointing of the Holy Spirit can guide you toward the truth of the right view. I would add a caution that with any of these filters, you may have a personal hindrance to the filter working properly. Perhaps you were raised in a church that taught you something that was wrong. When you hear the truth preached, you may not be able to filter correctly because of your past doctrine. Ultimately, if your discernment is going to be supernatural, you have to be humble enough to let the Holy Spirit change, guide, and direct you.

4. PEACE OF CHRIST IN YOUR HEART

“Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful” (Colossians 3:15).

Interestingly, the root word for *rule* in this verse is the same root word from which we get our word *umpire*. In baseball, the umpire is the closest official to the home plate; therefore, he is the

best person to make an impartial judgment call. He is the one person who has the authority to decide if a player is “safe” or out.

In a similar manner, when we have a choice or decision in front of us, the indwelling peace of Christ in our heart will help guide us. If you are tempted, the peace of Christ within you will be disturbed. If you are going to make the right decision, even though it is a scary step of faith, the peace of Christ will increase your confidence. When you are faced with a situation, you should pause for a moment and take stock of the condition of your peace. Let the Holy Spirit tell you if you are “safe” or if you are “out.”

5. THE WAYS AND NATURE OF GOD

If you look at the nature of God, there are many things that are easy to filter. It is not in God’s nature to approve of abortion, murder, homosexuality, adultery, stealing, lying, witchcraft, disease, injustice, and so on. The Bible is our basis for understanding the nature of God. By setting aside opinions and bias, answers can be found in the Word about everything in the nature and ways of God.

Passages like this one show us so much about the ways and nature of God:

*Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from destruction, who crowns you with loving-kindness and tender mercies, who satisfies your mouth with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. The Lord executes righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed. He made known **His ways** to Moses, **His acts** to the children of Israel (Psalms 103:2-7).*

FINAL WORD ABOUT FILTERS

There are many voices in the world that are clamoring for your attention. It is so important to have a system to filter through the voices that you are hearing. We want to be able to know clearly that we are hearing the voice of the Lord and not being deceived by the voice of another. I picture this process of filtering as if I have a handful of mud, and I only want the water. If I were to take a window screen and mash my handful of mud against it, then I would prevent some of the mud from getting through, but much of it would still get through. The best plan of action would be to place multiple window screens, say five for example, in layers over each other, then mash the mud against them. I would then get mostly water. This is how I imagine that these filters work for us.

ACTIVATION

This exercise may take some time. Start by getting a sheet of paper and a writing implement. Now write a letter from Jesus to yourself. Jesus abides within you, so all you have to do is focus on listening to Him speak to you and write a letter of what He says.

The Scripture tells us that all prophetic words are to be tested and proven. The next step is to examine the letter under each filter to be sure that every sentence lines up with the filters. If a filter is violated, scratch out that sentence from your letter. This is a good practice for what you should do with each prophetic word that you receive and each word that you believe that you are hearing from the Lord.

Go back to Activation II from [Chapter 6](#), “The Unseen Realm,” and apply the five filters to your letter. Then deliver this letter of love and encouragement to that individual. Whether you have to call, mail, or deliver in person, do not underestimate the value of giving this to the other person. It is not only good for growing your personal gifting, but I have found many people who I have given letters to who have come back to me years later and told me that they still carry that letter in their backpack or purse and read it regularly. This exercise can be done regularly and will continue to grow and stretch your faith and gifting, and you will be leaving a trail of blessing others behind you as you do it.

ENDNOTES

1. Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ* (New York, NY: Bantam Books, 1995).
2. This information comes from W. E. Vine and F. F. Bruce, *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1981), 314, 315, 222.

CHAPTER 9

HINDRANCES TO DISCERNMENT

THERE ARE MANY THINGS that can hinder us from operating clearly in discerning of spirits. We should be protective of what we allow our eyes to see and our ears to hear. There are things that can violate us spiritually. We must also watch over our heart and motives so that our ability to discern is not distorted. The following nine categories are just a sampling of the most common things that distort discernment.

SCARY MOVIES

Movies can powerfully stir the imagination. As those who want to operate in the highest level of accuracy in discerning of spirits, we have to be careful of the food that we feed our imagination. There are hundreds of wonderful movies, and they can be a great way to relax and unwind after a long day, but there are also very evil movies.

Movies that are intended to scare, cause fear, and keep you in constant suspense can be very influential on your discernment. As for which movies this would apply to, I believe it is person specific, not a legalistic rule imposed by others. For example, I first realized the power of scary movies when I saw *Signs* with Mel Gibson. To most people this was not a scary movie. I, however, had recently received a powerful impartation that had caused my discernment to be heightened, and as a result I had some scary encounters with the demonic after watching this movie. When a film is watched for enjoyment, our spirit is open and can receive defilement that we did not intend to receive.

However, I have no problem watching such movies as *The Exorcism of Emily Rose*, because as a minister, I want to be aware of what is influencing America's understanding of deliverance. When I watch such a film, I watch it as research and I have my heart guarded. My standards are personal, and I would recommend

that you prayerfully consider which movies you need to avoid. Fear-inducing movies will hinder your discernment.

PAST EMOTIONAL WOUNDS

As humans living in a fallen world, we tend to carry around a lot of emotional “baggage.” We can pick up baggage from family, friends, coworkers, and church leaders. This baggage can cause our discernment to be inaccurate. Let us make sure that our heart is the same as Jesus toward those around us. If anything is preventing you from loving someone the same way Jesus loves them, you may need to repent or forgive.

Consider the emotional response of James and John when they wanted to call down fire upon the Samaritan village (see Luke 9:54-56). Jesus very specifically told them that they didn’t realize what spirit they were operating under. This can happen very easily—one moment your discernment is sharp; then suddenly a personal wound causes discernment to be far from accurate.

Practically speaking, this happens when there is a room full of people and there is a person present from whom you received a personal wound. The presence of this one person can cause interference in your ability to operate with the heart of the Lord. The best remedy is to deal with your hurts, offenses, and wounds by extending forgiveness. You will know when you have truly forgiven someone, if, when you look at them, you have compassion for them in your heart. The healthier you are emotionally, the healthier your discerning ability will be.

BAD DOCTRINE

The presence of bad teaching can drastically limit your ability to operate in discerning of spirits. If you have been taught that you don't have authority over the demonic, you may be too afraid to use discernment. Perhaps you have been taught that it is not your gift and it is unavailable to you. Maybe you had been trained in the occult or New Age before you became a believer. These can all be hindrances to operating fully and correctly in discerning of spirits. The best idea is to find excellent, biblically based teaching to clarify and improve your understanding. Always remember to remain humble enough in your beliefs that the Holy Spirit can gently correct or guide you to greater truth. Someone once said, "Bad doctrine is like bad breath; you are usually the last one to know you have it, and no one wants to tell you."

INTERNAL STRESS

The stress of work, family, lack of sleep, health issues, finances, deferred hopes, and a host of other issues can interfere with our discernment. We must have an up-to-date, abiding relationship with Jesus to handle stress correctly. We must operate out of a heart of peace. Without this, we will be inaccurate in our discernment gift.

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God” (Philippians 4:6).

THE FEAR OF MAN

“The fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is kept safe” (Proverbs 29:25).

The only thing that we are allowed to fear as Christians is God Himself. If we are afraid of man or man’s opinion, it will hinder our ability to discern accurately.

“Does Job fear God for nothing?” satan replied. “Have You not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land” (Job 1:9-10).

The principle is this, *“What you fear will hedge you in.”* If you fear the devil, he will hedge you in. If you fear the Lord, He will put His hedge of protection around you. This same principle can also hedge in your ability to discern correctly. Fear only the Lord, and let Him hedge you in. Entrust yourself to Him fully; cast all your cares on Him for He cares for you (see 1 Pet. 5:7).

DISOBEDIENCE

The more obedient we are to the Lord, the more He can entrust to us: *“Whoever has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him”* (Matt. 13:12).

By obeying the Lord and being good stewards, He can give us more and more discernment in the spirit. Conversely, the more we stray, and are disobedient, lazy, or wicked, our gift will be much hindered. Choose obedience.

EVIL MOTIVES

Your motives can taint your gift. Jesus rebuked Peter about his heart motives:

But when Jesus turned and looked at His disciples, He rebuked Peter. "Get behind Me, satan!" He said. "You do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men" (Mark 8:33).

Jesus also rebuked James and John for not having a right heart.

"And He sent messengers on ahead, who went into a Samaritan village to get things ready for Him; but the people there did not welcome Him, because He was heading for Jerusalem. When the disciples James and John saw this, they asked, "Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them?" But Jesus turned and rebuked them" (Luke 9:52-55).

Apparently, Peter learned his lesson from Jesus about having right motives. Peter later rebuked Simon the sorcerer in Acts 8, because he had evil motives in his heart. After Peter had learned his lesson from Jesus about heart motives, he was then equipped to

correct others.

When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money and said, "Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit."

Peter answered: "May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money! You have no part or share in this ministry, because your heart is not right before God. Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps He will forgive you for having such a thought in your heart. For I see that you are full of bitterness and captive to sin." Then Simon answered, "Pray to the Lord for me so that nothing you have said may happen to me" (Acts 8:18-24).

We have to be careful that our operation of the gifts is used in selfless love, not out of some form of self-promotion or financial gain.

SUPERSTITION

*... with whom the Lord had made a covenant and charged them, saying: “**You shall not fear other gods...**[and again]... **you shall not fear other gods.**And the covenant that I have made with you, you shall not forget, **nor shall you fear other gods**” (2 Kings 17:35-38 NKJV).*

There are far too many Christians today who think they are spiritual because they can “sense” the presence of evil spirits, or “discern territorial demons.” It is good that we can discern the presence of something evil, but what many have done with the information has bordered on superstition.

Jesus finished out His 40-day fast (see Matthew 4) with a face-to-face visitation by satan himself, yet we don’t see any fear on the part of Jesus. No spookiness, no nonsense—He just stood in His personal identity, as we should, and rebuked the devil out of Scripture as we should. There are many Christians today who have become so spooky spiritually that they do not stand in the confidence of their identity.

LUST ISSUES

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Do not commit adultery.’ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart” (Matthew 5:27-28).

The vast proliferation of pornography, especially through the Internet, is the enemy’s plan to pollute our eyes spiritually. He is more aware than the Church is that the Lord intends to raise up the gift of discerning of spirits throughout His Body in the earth.

The Body of Christ has been blind to the spirit realm around us for too long, and God is bringing restoration to discernment. The enemy would like to entrap the Church in a sinful bondage to lust, thus preempting the Lord’s restoration. We must not be hindered. If this is an issue in your life, get wise, godly help and deal urgently and aggressively with it. This is an issue for which you will need help and accountability in order to gain complete victory. I strongly recommend the book *Purity: The New Moral Revolution* by Kris Vallotton.¹ I also recommend the Web ministry of the Triple X Church (www.XXXChurch.com). It contains many excellent resources and computer-filtering software.

ACTIVATION

Jesus said,

“The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!” (Matthew 6:22-23).

And Psalm 101:3 says, *“I will set before my eyes no vile thing.”*

Many of us have darkened our spiritual eyes with the filth of sin. Put the following prayer in your own words to cleanse your spiritual eyes.

Lord Jesus,

I confess that I have put certain things in my sight and hearing that are sinful. I ask for Your forgiveness and cleansing. I forgive any individuals who have hurt or offended me [include their names and be specific about what they did]. Wash my eyes clean and give Me your grace to walk in freedom and wholeness.

As a prophetic act of cleansing, splash running water over your eyes.

ENDNOTES

1. Kris Vallotton, *Purity: The New Moral Revolution* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image, 2008).

CHAPTER 10

THE FORCE OF LOVE

Why a Chapter on Love?

WHEN WE LOOK AT the apostle Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, we must remember that it is a letter, not a book with chapters. The thoughts throughout the whole letter are actually connected and build on one another. In our world of chapters, verses, and endless Bible versions, it is easy to forget the original fluidity of Paul's letters.

Remembering that the letter was not divided into chapters originally, we will focus on [chapters 12](#) to [14](#), specifically.

[Chapter 12](#) contains the list of the nine spiritual gifts.

[Chapter 13](#) is the "love chapter."

[Chapter 14](#) explains the application of the spiritual gifts in the church congregation.

What we often fail to recognize is that [Chapter 13](#) is in between 12 and 14 on purpose. Every spiritual gift has to be used in love, "*whether you speak in the tongue of men or angels, or have the gift of prophecy, or can fathom all mysteries*" (see 1 Cor. 13:1-2). This is why the "love chapter" is in the middle of the

discussion of the gifts.

The gifts have to operate through love. Many people have a wimpy understanding of love, or they lean the other way into a harsh understanding of so-called “tough love.”

I recommend the following as a guide. Discerning of spirits is looking at anything in life through the eyes of Jesus. It is like putting on a pair of glasses that would enable you to see people and situations as if you were looking through Jesus’ eyes. Jesus looks at everything through a lens of perfect love. If you want to know when discerning of spirits is not in operation, remember this definition.

WHAT IS LOVE?

One of the most well-known sections of Scripture is First Corinthians 13. It is frequently spoken at weddings all over the country. The fact is, First Corinthians 13:4-8 gives one of the best definitions of love that has ever been written. This passage gives 16 key points about what love is: (1) *patient*, (2) *kind*, (3) *does not envy*, (4) *does not boast*, (5) *is not proud*, (6) *is not rude*, (7) *is not self-seeking*, (8) *is not easily angered*, (9) *keeps no record of wrongs*, (10) *does not delight in evil*, (11) *rejoices with the truth*, (12) *always protects*, (13) *always trusts*, (14) *always hopes*, (15) *always perseveres*, (16) *never fails*.

We have another definition of love in Galatians that many have overlooked. When we refer to the fruit of the spirit mentioned in Galatians 5, often the thinking is that this is a list of character traits. The passage starts with verse 22 saying, “*But the fruit of the spirit is love...*” Notice that the fruit is singular. If you look in the original language of the text, the fruit of the spirit is truly singular, it is not the fruit(s) of the spirit. Love is the one fruit of the spirit. The eight words that come after, “*...joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control*” are merely further descriptions of the one fruit of the spirit. In other words, love is full of joy, full of peace, full of kindness, and so on.

Many have a weak notion of love as simply a feeling. A

closer look at the Word shows us that love is a choice. God so loved the world, that He made the choice to do something (see John 3:16). We need to choose to walk in the lifestyle of love. The following three verses make it very clear that love is a decision:

*“But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled, **putting on faith and love** as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet” (1 Thessalonians 5:8).*

*“But you, man of God, flee from all this, and **pursue... love...**” (1 Timothy 6:11).*

*“Flee the evil desires of youth, and **pursue...love.** along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart” (2 Timothy 2:22).*

Love is not only a choice that is made once, but it is a choice that we make daily. We should be known for having our whole lifestyle revolve around love. It is the filter that all of our words, attitudes, and actions have to go through before we speak or act.

*“As you have heard from the beginning, His command is that you **walk in love**” (2 John 1:6b).*

“...live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God” (Ephesians 5:2).

“Keep yourselves in God’s love...” (Jude 1:21).

“Let all that you do be done with love” (1 Corinthians 16:14 NKJV).

Love has a certain way that it treats others. As we have seen, it is kind, patient, gentle, keeps no record of wrongs, etc. Love also has a unique quality about it, in that it can cover sin: *“Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins”* (1 Pet. 4:8).

We are called to love each other deeply, and many have been hindered from doing that because sin has been left exposed. Sin needs to be repented of, forgiven, and the record destroyed. Without love, we will still see each other through the lens of that past violation. Love literally gives us back the eyes to see each other without the sin.

Even in the cases where confrontation and exposure are needed to deal with sin, we have a model for how to handle that. The truth must be spoken in love. This pertains to our motivations. We are not to speak the truth just to validate ourselves; we don’t speak the truth to injure others; we speak the truth out of a heart of love—a heart that desires healing and restoration: *“...speak the truth in love...”* (see Eph. 4:15a).

“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly

*loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. And **over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity***" (Colossians 3:12,14).

Love is put in the chief place above all other virtues in Scripture. It is of the utmost importance. Not only is it the number one priority, but it also is the glue that holds all the other virtues in perfect balance. It would be easy for someone whose highest value is courage to mistreat others. But courage will function at its optimum capacity when used under love.

Love is as powerful as two evil forces in the world, fear and death. Song of Songs 8:6 says that love is as strong as death, and First John says that there is no fear in love: "*There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love*" (1 John 4:18 NKJV).

Love is literally a force in the spirit realm. It is as strong as death, and perfect love casts out fear. Many in the Church have pursued greater faith, but even faith does not function correctly without love: "*...faith works through love*" (see Gal. 5:6b NKJV).

Speaking of faith, Jesus said, "*I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be*

impossible for you” (Matt. 17:20b; see also Luke 17:6).

Faith has a power or force great enough to move a mountain; now consider the following truth: *“And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But **the greatest of these is love**”* (1 Cor. 13:13).

This is an amazing statement: Love is a greater force than hope or even faith. Thousands of sermons and books have been written about the incredible power of faith, but the even greater power of love has not received as much focus. If a mustard seed of faith can move a mountain or uproot and cast a tree into the sea, then what kind of magnificent power dwells in love? What if we lived our life with even a mustard seed of love? It would be way beyond moving mountains. This is the realm that I believe God is calling the Church worldwide to step into.

And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God (Ephesians 3:17b-19).

This builds on our previous thought about love being greater than faith. Only by grasping and being firmly rooted in love can we be filled with all the fullness of God. Like Ephesians 3 says, *“the*

love of Christ...surpasses knowledge.”

What would “being filled with the fullness of God” look like? I would say that it would be the purest form of being like Jesus. Because the Word says, “*God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Him [Jesus]*” (Col. 1:19).

UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

We have probably all heard the term *unconditional love*. As Christians, we should have the best understanding of what this phrase means because Jesus is the only person who has ever perfectly demonstrated unconditional love. When the word *unconditional* is used, it is referring to how we as humans typically set parameters for our relationships, such as, “If you do this, then I will respond in this manner.” Jesus broke the transactional nature of relationships by requiring nothing of us. He did not ask anything from us when we were lost in sin. As John 3:16 says, *“For God so loved the world that He sent His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.”*

God did not ask you to do anything before He would love you; without conditions, He chose to love us and act in love toward us. The apostle Paul reiterates this point in Romans 5:6-8: *“You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”*

Unconditional love is a kind of love that is hard to grasp as a human. Many people spend their life trying to live and act in such a way that they will be acceptable to others, yet Jesus (God the

Father and the Holy Spirit included) loves us without condition. Ephesians 3:19 says that this love “*surpasses knowledge,*” and Romans 8:39 says that nothing can separate us from the “*love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*”

INCREASING THE FORCE OF LOVE

The next logical thought would be, “How can I have more of this love in my life?”

I would like to share a great story that Kenneth Hagin Sr. wrote, which illustrates an important point about growing in love.

I was holding a meeting one time, and three pastors came to visit my services. After the meeting, we all went out to eat and fellowship together. These pastors began talking about the subject of the love of God. I was just listening to their conversation. I wasn't talking much. You know, sometimes you can learn more by listening than you can by talking because you already know everything *you* know!

Anyway, these pastors got to talking about how much believers fail in the love walk. And one of the pastors spoke up and said, “I'll tell you what! We need to pray! We need to pray that God would give us love. We just don't have the love of God as we ought to have.”

I didn't say anything. But I thought to myself, “Since the love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts, then if a person doesn't seem to have love, he's just got to learn to walk in the light of what he already has. That's where the problem is.” (See Rom. 5:5.)

Finally, one of the pastors asked me, “Brother Hagin, what do you think about it?” I asked, “Do you really want to know?” “Yes!” he said. “Well, if you fellows don’t have any love, as you just got through saying, then you need to get saved!” They looked at me in astonishment—sort of like I’d slapped them with a wet dish rag.

I continued, “The way you talk, we don’t have the love of God. But the Bible says, *‘We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren.’ And if we’re saved, we’ve got the love of God in our hearts because the Bible says the love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost*” (1 John 3:14 NKJV; Rom. 5:5 KJV).

“It’s not a matter of needing to pray that God would send us love, because He’s already given every believer a measure of love, just like He’s already given every believer a measure of faith. It’s just a matter of stirring up and using what’s already on the inside!”

I said, “If you’re saved, you already have a measure of love. You can pray until you are blue in the face that God would give you more love, but the love you have will never be increased until you feed it on God’s Word and exercise it so it can develop.

“If you develop it, then it will be increased. Feeding it on the Word and exercising it is the way you increase love. Love has to be exercised before it will produce results. But if you will be faithful

to exercise love, it will produce great fruit”¹

HOW DO WE WALK IN THE LOVE THAT WAS POURED INTO OUR HEARTS?

“And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him. In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like Him” (1 John 4:16-17).

First, we must acknowledge and have confidence that God loves us. And second, we must live our life pouring out that love to others. Many Christians try to walk in love toward others, without a constant acknowledgment of the love God has toward them. When you keep your focus on the love God has for you, then you overflow with that love toward others.

WITHOUT LOVE THERE IS NO DISCERNMENT

“Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy” (1 Corinthians 14:1).

I have found that you have to have the foundation of “following the way of love” before the gifts that you “eagerly desire” will function correctly. You may be able to see some limited operation of the gifts without walking in love, but ultimately they will be missing the heart of God.

WHEN LOVE LEAVES, SO DOES DISCERNMENT

I personally have a hard time operating in the gifts when I am not walking in love. For example, if someone with a difficult personality is in the vicinity and I am trying to focus my discernment, I run into a problem. My spirit is troubled by the difficult individual, and I am not able to step into love and function properly. I am trying to aim my love toward one person, while my discernment is picking up my bad attitude toward the other. I am literally getting in my own way.

LOVE IS DISCERNABLE

“By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another” (John 13:35).

While it is true that having a faith so powerful that it can move mountains is a sign that someone is walking under God's favor and anointing, the trait that Jesus established to discern one of His disciples is love.

ACTIVATION

“And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him” (1 John 4:16).

Close your eyes and engage your imagination. Focus on the fact that God has shed His love abroad in your heart. Recall to your mind that you rely on God’s love. Acknowledge the love that is within you. Picture it welling up, healing every wound, bringing freedom, healing your memories. The truth of God’s love for you, and in you, will set you free. This love gives your eyes the ability to see the world through the eyes of Jesus.

Picture the people in your life who you need to forgive—the ones who have hurt you—and see them through these eyes of love and forgive them. Take 5 to 10 minutes right now and give it to the Lord. Focus on the love of Jesus and meditate on these truths.

ENDNOTES

1. Kenneth Hagin, *Love, the Way to Victory* (Tulsa, OK: Faith Library Pub., 1994), 25-27.

CHAPTER 11

HEALING SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS

IN THIS CHAPTER we will look at four eyewitness accounts of the physically blind having their eyes opened and healed. We are going to examine each of these stories and see if there are clues, principles, and commonalities that teach us about having our spiritual sight restored. (1 endnote reference)

In 1 Corinthians 15:44-49 a principle is stated, “...*the natural came first and after that the spiritual.*” This is in reference to Adam being created first and then Jesus coming to earth as a second Adam. I am going to expound on the concept of the natural being followed by the spiritual and apply it in an unusual way. I want you, the reader, to understand that this is done with great care not to violate the original intent of the passages, which we will look at.

The four Gospels are eyewitness accounts of actual events; they are not allegorical in nature. Neither can we spiritualize everything and negate the context and original meaning. There are several categories that are used to understand the Word; here are

three of the most common.

1. PARABLES

When Jesus taught, He frequently used parables of things in the natural to explain the Kingdom of Heaven. Consider how many times He said, “The kingdom of heaven is like...”—then He would give a natural illustration. The natural realm can give us insight into what the spiritual realm is like.

2. TYPES AND SHADOWS

The Word communicates with us in the form of types and shadows, such as Moses building the sanctuary as a shadow of what he saw in Heaven (see Heb. 8:5; 9:23-24). Also, the Old Testament feasts and festivals were mere shadows of things to come; the reality is now found in Christ (see Col. 2:16-17).

3. NATURAL PRINCIPLES THAT HAVE A SPIRITUAL EQUIVALENT

A good example of this is found in sowing and reaping (see Gal. 6:7-9). God taught His people that the spiritual reality of sowing and reaping could be understood in the natural principles of agriculture.

CASE#1

Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and His disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (that is, the Son of Timaeus), was sitting by the roadside begging. When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." So they called to the blind man, "Cheer up! On your feet! He's calling you." Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus. "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked him. The blind man said, "Rabbi, I want to see." "Go," said Jesus, "your faith has healed you," Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road (Mark 10:46-52; Luke 18:35-43).

The first trait we recognize about Bartimaeus is that he was a very persistent individual. When he heard that Jesus was coming by, he began to shout, and when he was rebuked for shouting, he shouted even more. He had the opportunity to be offended at their rebuke, but he chose to metaphorically climb over the offense to get to Jesus. Jesus stopped, called for him, and waited in the street while Bartimaeus came to Him.

Culturally, it is interesting that Bartimaeus threw aside his cloak. His cloak was his legal license to be a beggar. By throwing it aside, he was declaring by faith that he wouldn't need it anymore. If he had not been healed of his blindness, how would he have even found the cloak again after he threw it aside?

Jesus asked Bartimaeus, "What do you want me to do for you?" He responded, "I want to see." Jesus then said, "Your faith has healed you." There are a few principles from this story that are important for us: be persistent, overcome the offense, pursue Jesus, throw aside your cloak (or your comfort zone), and desire to see. Jesus is waiting for you, and it is your faith that will open your eyes.

CASE#2

As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed him, calling out, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!" When he had

gone indoors, the blind men came to Him, and He asked them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" "Yes, Lord," they replied. Then He touched their eyes and said, "According to your faith will it be done to you;" and their sight was restored (Matthew 9:27-30).

As with Bartimaeus, pursuit is one of the main traits of this account. Two blind men were stumbling down the street crying out for Jesus. They even managed to follow Jesus indoors and come face to face with Him. Jesus asked, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" "Yes," they replied. Then Jesus laid hands on their eyes and told them that according to their faith, they had been healed.

Again, it was the faith of the individual that opened their eyes. In this case, laying on of hands took place, and sometimes this can be an element to receiving sight. As always, faith was the connector to receiving sight.

CASE#3

They came to Bethsaida, and some people brought a blind man and begged Jesus to touch him. He took the blind man by the hand and led him outside the village. When He had spit on the man's eyes and put His hands on Him, Jesus asked, "Do you see anything?" He looked up and said, "I see

people; they look like trees walking around.” Once more Jesus put His hands on the man’s eyes. Then his eyes were opened, his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly (Mark 8:22-25).

In this case, unlike the first two, the blind man was brought to Jesus; he didn’t pursue Jesus. Instead of shouting at the blind man to be quiet, his friends “begged Jesus” to heal him. Jesus led him outside the village, but why? Jesus spat on the man’s eyes, but why? Jesus didn’t declare to the blind man that his faith had healed him, but rather asked him if he could see. This is a unique story indeed.

By taking the man outside of the village, Jesus removed the comfort of the familiar. A blind man who is used to feeling his way around familiar areas has created a specific comfort zone. When he is brought into new and unfamiliar surroundings, expectations can be altered. The next step was to provide an offense.

At this point the blind man had done nothing to show faith and pursuit. Jesus provided an obstacle for him by spitting on his eyes. Spitting on blind people was a common and degrading practice in Israel at the time. Bill Johnson says, “At times, God offends the mind to reveal the heart.” Then Jesus laid His hands on the man and released healing.

The final part of the story is one of the most encouraging

sections in the Gospels for anyone involved in healing ministry. It shows us that Jesus had at least one progressive healing in His ministry, and this is not considered a failure. Progressive opening of eyes is perfectly acceptable. This is important for our study because your spiritual eyes and discernment may not instantly be opened. Perhaps it will be a progressive opening. God may have to take you out of your comfort zone, and even provide an offense to push through.

CASE#4

Having said this, He spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. "Go," He told him, "wash in the Pool of Siloam" (this word means Sent). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing. His neighbors and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, "Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?"

Some claimed that he was. Others said, "No, he only looks like him." But he himself insisted, "I am the man." "How then were your eyes opened?" they demanded. He replied, "The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could see" (John 9:6-11).

As with Case #3, Jesus put spit on the eyes. Again, this was

an offense to the blind man. Here we find that Jesus commanded an activation of faith by sending him to the pool to wash.

An interesting detail is that those who daily saw the blind man didn't recognize him. He was so transformed that others couldn't even recognize him. When you begin to operate in discernment and your spiritual eyes open, some who thought they knew you, might not recognize you (metaphorically speaking). The blind man didn't physically change other than receiving sight, yet he was unrecognizable. The story continues with another offense.

Now the day on which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man's eyes was a Sabbath.... Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for He does not keep the Sabbath" (John 9:14,16).

The blind man attributed his experience to God, yet the spiritual leaders around him claimed that the experience was not from God. This is common for those who have their eyes opened, whether it is the offense of God healing today or the offense of a Christian having his or her spiritual eyes opened. There will always be "leaders" who claim that it couldn't be God, for a host of reasons.

Then they hurled insults at him and said, "You are this fellow's disciple! We are disciples of Moses! We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we don't even

know where He comes from.” The man answered, “Now that is remarkable! You don’t know where He comes from, yet He opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly man who does His will. Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, He could do nothing.” To this they replied, “You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!” And they threw him out (John 9:28-38).

There is a saying that the “Pharisees could only honor their dead prophets.”² The Pharisees could not accept the new move of God that was happening in their midst. It violated their paradigm, and they were not willing to update to a new wineskin.

The now-healed blind man offered an excellent apologetic for proof of Jesus’ Messiahship, and because the Pharisees had no worthy response, they switched gears. They turned to character defamation against an innocent man who did nothing wrong other than receive healing on the wrong day of the week.

Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when He found him, He said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” “Who is He, sir?” the man asked. “Tell me so that I may believe in Him.” Jesus said, “You have now seen Him; in fact, He is the one speaking with you.” Then the man said, “Lord, I believe,” and He worshiped Him (John 9:35-38).

This man was willing to step through all these offenses, and Jesus came back and revealed Himself again in a deeper way. The principle to pick up from this story is that persecution and hardship will follow the blessings that are received from Jesus. If there is endurance and persistence, you will be proven to be a good steward of the gift of sight that God has given, and subsequent revelation will come. He will reveal Himself in even greater measures, which is ultimately our goal.

ACTIVATION

Declare each one of these statements out loud ten times:

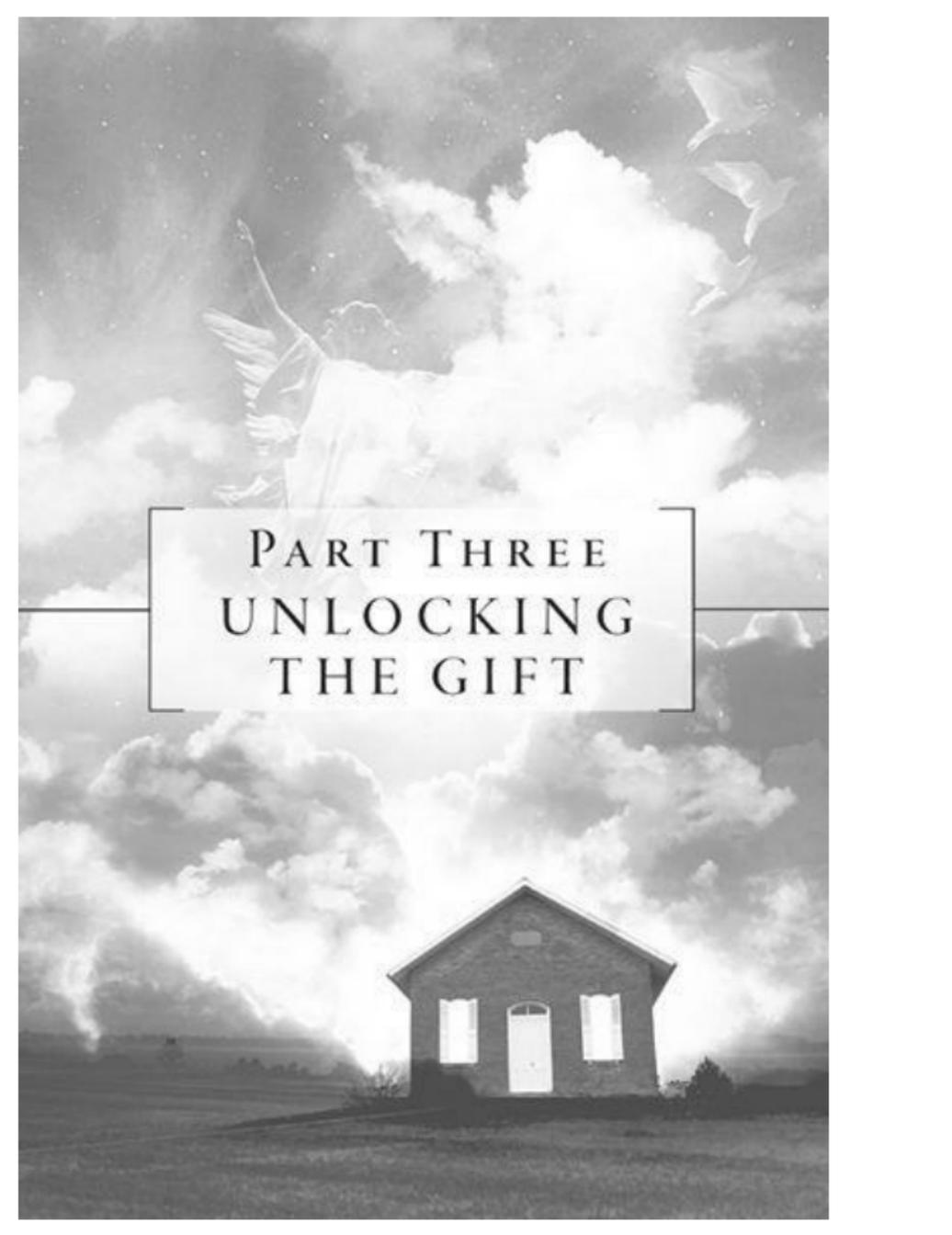
Jesus, I will pursue You no matter what.

I will overcome offense and disappointment to follow You.

I will follow, full of faith.

ENDNOTES

1. On a speculative side note, it is likely that Adam and Eve—before sin—had the full use of their spiritual senses. And if you remember what we learned in [Chapter 2](#), we all have spiritual eyes; we just need them restored. In that sense we are like blind men—having eyes, yet being without sight.
- [2.](#) Joel C. Elowsky and Thomas C. Oden write in their commentary on the Book of John, “While alive their fellow citizens dishonored them (the prophets), but dead they respect them by building and adorning their tombs.” From *John 1-10, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 173.



PART THREE
UNLOCKING
THE GIFT

CHAPTER 12

FOUR KEYS TO INCREASING FAITH

THE LORD SHOWED ME a picture of a long hallway with doors on both sides, like you might see in a hotel. Each door had the name of a biblical experience on it. The first door said on it, “The door of salvation.” The next door said on it, “The door of baptism in the Holy Spirit.” There were endless doors, each with different labels such as, “The door of healing” or “The door of deliverance.”

Each one of these doors had a lock. In order to access these experiences, you needed a key. The Lord showed me that one key will open all these doors, and that key is faith. Even though the Word is filled with promises and truths, the key of faith is required to open every door of promise.

Faith should always lead us into an experience of what we are having faith for. If I have faith for salvation, I should experience salvation. If I have faith for baptism in the Holy Spirit, I should experience baptism in the Holy Spirit. Every promise in Scripture is experienced by faith. Faith is the key that unlocks every door to experiences. *“Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours”* (Mark

11:24). Faith brings us into an experience.

Scripture is filled with promises of what can be received and walked in by faith. Looking at Hebrews 11, which has been nicknamed “The Hall of Faith,” each person mentioned had an experience with God, and each story was remembered as by faith. The key to their experience was that they entered in by faith. If we want to experience greater discernment, we will need greater faith. This requires not just mental agreement, but an active faith that turns the key in the doorknob. I can say in my mind that I believe God can heal me, but if I don’t have an active faith, then I will lack the experience.

DOORS OF EXPERIENCE

These are ten examples of truth that can be realized, felt, lived, enjoyed, and experienced in life by faith.

salvation—We are saved by grace, through faith (see Eph. 2:8).

Healing—By His stripes, we are healed (see Isa. 53:3-5; 1 Pet. 2:24).

Abiding—We are with Christ hidden in God (see Col. 3:1-3).

Insight—We have the mind of Christ (see 1 Cor. 2:16).

Power—Your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven (see Matt. 6:10).

Joy—In His presence is fullness of joy (see Ps. 16:11).

authority—We are seated with Him in heavenly places (see Eph. 2:1-10).

hearing God—My sheep hear My voice (see John 10:27).

Fruit of the spirit—Since we live in the Spirit, let us walk in the Spirit (see Gal. 5:22-25).

intimacy—Those joined with the Lord are one spirit with Him (see 1 Cor. 6:17).

By now you might be thinking that this is good, but what does it have to do with seeing into the spirit? The connection is that *“we walk by faith, not by sight”* (2 Cor. 5:7 NKJV). Faith is what enables our spirit eyes. Faith helps us see the unseen. We do not make spiritual decisions by what can be seen with physical eyes. Faith reads the Word and sees the angels who surround us. Faith sees the presence of Jesus each day, as He said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” Most people are content hearing these truths and standing outside the door of truth, never entering in. Faith cannot be satisfied with the mental knowledge of truth. Faith is only satisfied when one enters into truth.

It must be remembered that the Word of God is living and active. It is alive and waiting for you to experience its glorious riches. Experiencing angels, Heaven, the manifest presence of God, visions, trances, and dreams are available to us through faith. I will put one caution here for balance. You can't take a Scripture and wield it without the direction of the Holy Spirit. Remember, the Word of God is the sword of the spirit, which means it is the Holy Spirit's sword, not your sword. We need to submit to the Holy Spirit for its wielding to be safe and powerful.

STEP INSIDE

Many of us have stepped through the doors of salvation, baptism in the Holy Spirit, healing, deliverance, and hearing the voice of God, and have had these experiences. This is about as far down the hallway of experience as the Western Church has been willing to venture.

These are the doors that are commonly preached about, believed in, and entered into. Yet the Scripture is not exhausted by these few wonderful experiences alone. God has given us a whole book of truths to enter into, and none of us will ever exhaust all that can be experienced through faith.

Have we yet experienced to the fullest what it means to be “in Christ,” or “seated in heavenly places,” or being “one spirit with Him,” or “walking in the spirit,” or “having the mind of Christ”? Let me encourage you; there is so much more! Keep pushing down the hallway.

SOME DOORS ARE HARDER TO OPEN

The door of salvation has been in active use and teaching for centuries. Martin Luther was a pioneer in pushing this door open for the Body of Christ. Nowadays, salvation by grace through faith is easily experienced.

Now salvation is taught in every true church and can be brought with confidence to anyone, anytime, even to a homeless person on the street or a rich person on Wall Street. Yet, some of the doors seem harder to experience. Prophecy, for example. Perhaps I have faith to believe, "*My sheep can hear My voice,*" but I don't always seem to experience hearing His voice.

One explanation could be that some of the infrequently used doors have rust on them, metaphorically speaking, which makes them squeaky and hard to open. This may be why some people still don't get healed or delivered; a certain level of breakthrough has not been obtained and maintained in the Church.

WITHOUT FAITH, DOORS DO NOT OPEN

“For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it” (Hebrews 4:2).

The Word of God can be negated by the response of the hearer. In this verse, the Word going forth was not lacking, but faith was lacking on the part of certain hearers. Those who heard with faith received the promise, whereas those who heard and did not mix faith with the message received nothing. This concept is summed up in the phrase, “You get out what you put in.” If you do not mix faith with the Word of God that you hear, then you will not receive the promises of the Word. God has given you the authority to receive or negate His promises dependent upon your response.

PRACTICAL KEYS

Experience is what all relationships are made of. If you desire a closer relationship with God, then your desire includes greater experience with Him. Since we understand that faith leads us to greater experience, we should desire greater faith. Our heart should be the same as the disciples' who said to the Lord, *"Increase our faith!"* (Luke 17:5). Here are four practical keys in the Word that build greater faith.

1. FASTING AND ***P***RAYER

"Lord, have mercy on my son," he said. "He has seizures and is suffering greatly. He often falls into the fire or into the water. I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not heal him." "O unbelieving and perverse generation," Jesus replied, "how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy here to Me."

Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of the boy, and he was healed from that moment. Then the disciples came to Jesus in private and asked, "Why couldn't we drive it out?"

He replied, "Because you have so little faith. I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you." But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting (Matthew 17:15-21).

Jesus says it is because of their little faith, and then He gives them the remedy of prayer with fasting. This will get them the faith they need for the healing and deliverance of the child. Fasting is one of four specific things that we can do to build greater faith. Great faith leads to greater experience.

MORE ABOUT FASTING

Often when I fast, people ask me, “Did God tell you to fast?” I have been considering why people ask that, especially since I commonly respond, “No, He didn’t tell me to fast; I just decided to fast.” There is nothing that commands us as New Testament believers when to fast, how long to fast, and so on. There were specific times to fast in the Old Testament, but the New Testament does not command us in these things.

The same is true of praying in the Holy Spirit or listening for a “rhema” word from the Lord. The Word tells us that these things will build our faith, but the Lord doesn’t command us to activate them; He just makes them available.

I believe that each one of these will build our faith, thereby bringing us greater ability to enter experience.

God has given us the tools to build enough faith to access any door, yet He leaves us our freewill to decide when to fast, when to pray, and when to listen. When we decide to build our faith, it is something we initiate, and then in response He increases our faith so that we can experience more of His Kingdom. This is a fundamental element in our relationship with God; He gives us the choice of the relationship we want: “*Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you*” (James 4:8 NKJV). Another way to say it would be, “The ball is in our court.”

2. PRAYING IN THE SPIRIT

“But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit” (Jude 1:20 NKJV).

Praying in the Spirit is different from fasting because if you come across a situation where you need to access faith immediately, you can begin praying in the Spirit at a moment's notice. However, fasting is done ahead of time, to store up faith. We can fill ourselves up daily by praying in the Spirit, but it is always on call as well.

3. HEARING THE PROPHETIC WORD OF GOD

“So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word [rhema] of God” (Romans 10:17 NKJV).

The “rhema” word of God is when the Lord prophetically applies His words to you, in your situation. He speaks these things directly into your spirit and encourages, strengthens and comforts you. This gives you greater faith. Prophet Bill Hamon

says,

A *rhema* is a word or an illustration God speaks directly to us, and it addresses our personal, particular situation. It is a timely, Holy Spirit-inspired Word from the Logos (the Bible) that brings life, power, and faith to perform and fulfill it. Its significance is exemplified in the injunction to take the “*sword of the Spirit, which is the word [rhema] of God*” (Eph. 6:17).

It can be received through others such as by a prophetic word, or be an illumination given to one directly in [his or her] personal meditation time in the Bible or in prayer. The logos is the fixed Word of God—the Scriptures—and the rhema is a particular portion in line with the logos brought forth by the Spirit to be applied directly to something in our personal experience.¹

4. *F*ELLOWSHIPING WITH *P*EOPLE OF *F*AITH

“That you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith” (Romans 1:12b).

Proverbs 27:17 says, “*Iron sharpens iron.*” Being around someone who has greater faith than you prods you to greater faith. The encouragement can also come from two equals, who provoke

each other to greater faith in the Lord. Personally, I am tremendously encouraged by listening to teachers with great faith, such as Bill Johnson or Heidi Baker. I choose to listen regularly to recordings of their teachings to keep my faith lifted up. I also make conscious decisions to have lunch with people of faith so that we can mutually encourage each other.

“GOOD WORKS”

What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, “Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. But someone will say, “You have faith; I have deeds.” Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do (James 2:14-18).

I have found that every time I teach on the four keys of faith, I always get a naysayer who comes to warn me after the service. His or her basic premise is that I need to be careful how I teach the four keys because they could be interpreted as a formula of “good

works.” The implication is that grace and works are mutually exclusive entities.

This is fundamentally not true.

After we have received salvation by grace, good works should flow out of us as a natural byproduct. The Book of James implies that an individual's salvation is questionable if good works are not flowing out. Good works are the fruit and evidence of grace and faith.

You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. And the scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,” and he was called God’s friend. You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone. In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead (James 2:20-26).

The four keys are not about good works gaining salvation; the keys only work after salvation is received. Once we have come into

the Kingdom there are specific things that we can choose to do to build our confidence and faith substance in the spirit realm (see Heb. 11:1). The keys are just four examples of many things that can be done to strengthen faith. This is not about earning salvation, so the “good works” argument is not applicable.

FAITH IS CONFIDENCE

There has been a lot of teaching surrounding the word *faith*. Sometimes it can seem like the very definition of the word might be convoluted. I would suggest that we can use another word when we are trying to express ourselves regarding faith.

The word *confidence* is an excellent substitute that the world understands much more clearly. In fact, the word *confidence* can be traced back to two Latin root words, *com-* and *fidere*, which together mean “with faith.” So when I speak to a non-Christian on the street and tell them that I have confidence that God wants to save their soul, I am literally saying that I have faith that God wants to save them. Also, when I say that fasting builds my faith, I am saying that it builds my confidence, as does praying in the Spirit, or hearing the prophetic word. This change of terminology will bring much clarity for some of us.

ACTIVATION

To build your faith, follow the next four suggestions:

1. Pick a time to fast, perhaps a meal, a day, or a week, then follow through.
2. Make a habit of praying in tongues. Set your watch for three minutes and pray right now.
3. Read the Word until the Holy Spirit lifts a verse off the page to you. This verse may speak to you in an intimate way, or it may seem to have revelation for you. Carry this Word around in your heart all day, and the next day repeat.
4. Call someone who encourages your faith, someone you look up to. Invite them to have lunch with you. Pull on their faith—and be provoked to a greater walk with the Lord. Ask them questions.

ENDNOTES

1. Bill Hamon, *Apostles, Prophets, and the Coming Moves of God* (Santa Rosa Beach, FL: Christian International, 1997), 284-285.

CHAPTER 13

BIBLICAL MEDITATION

A Different Kind of Meditation

THE FALSE RELIGIONS of the world—Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and the New Age to name a few—teach that meditation is emptying the mind to have spiritual experiences. This is their understanding of meditation.

The Bible teaches us to meditate in a fundamentally different way—it directs us to meditate on the Word and wait on God. The Bible even tells us what to fill the mind with. In the Word there are five categories on which we are to meditate.

1. MEDITATE ON GOOD THINGS

Many people suffer from various mental and emotional illnesses because they only meditate on bad and negative things. Proverbs 23:7 says, *“For as [a man] thinks in his heart, so is he”* (NKJV). We must choose what thoughts we entertain. Because our thoughts influence and change us, they can make or break us; they manifest as the life that we live.

“Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things” (Philippians 4:8 NKJV).

“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord...” (Psalms 19:14 NKJV).

“May my meditation be sweet to Him; I will be glad in the Lord” (Psalms 104:34 NKJV).

2.MEDITATE ON THE WORD OF GOD

The Bible is “*God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work*” (2 Tim. 3:16-17). The importance of meditating on the Word is self-evident to many of us. But for good measure, consider Joshua 1:8:

“Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.”

One of my favorite books of the Bible is Proverbs. When I read it and a verse speaks to me, I repeat it out loud several times. I ponder it, and I chew on it. Then I carry that verse in my heart and mind all day long. It becomes my bread for that day. The next day I open Proverbs again and pull out another piece of bread. If I can find a way to incorporate that word for the day into a conversation with someone, this helps me remember the verse for the future. The true value of Scripture memorization is in application.

3.MEDITATE ON PROPHETIC WORDS

There are many things that should be done with prophetic words: testing, judging, proving, warring with, praying over them, and walking them out. One aspect that seems to be under-taught is that we should meditate upon our prophetic words. First Timothy 4:14-15 says, *“Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership.*

Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all.”

I take this category very seriously. In fact I have a three-ring binder containing sheets of paper on which I have printed all the prophetic words that I have received. I take this with me when I travel; I read it before meetings, after meetings, when I am tired, and so forth. This is a constant source of encouragement, and it keeps my vision focused on the calling of my life. Just as Paul advised Timothy, I give myself to my prophecies.

4. MEDITATE ON THE LORD HIMSELF

“When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You in the night watches” (Ps. 63:6). By keeping our mind focused on the Lord, we encourage our abiding relationship with Him. There are many ways to meditate on the Lord. One of the most practical that I have found is focusing on the names of the Lord. Names equal nature, so by revealing His names to us, God has revealed His nature to us. If He says that His name is, *“Jehovah Rapha, the Lord our healer,”* then He is sharing with you that His nature is that of a healer.

Here are some of the names of the Lord with which to begin your study:

El-shaddai—The almighty god (see Gen. 17:1-2)

Jehovah-Jireh—The Lord Our Provider (see Gen. 22:14)

Jehovah-Rapha—The lord Our healer (see Exod. 15:22-26)

Jehovah-Tsidqenu—The lord Our righteousness (see Jer. 33:16)

Jehovah-Nissi—The lord is My Banner (see Exod. 17:15)

Jehovah-shalom—The lord Our Peace (see Judg. 6:24)

Jehovah-shammah—The lord is There (see Ezek. 48:35)

Jehovah-sabaoth—The lord of hosts (see Rom. 9:29)

I regularly go on walks around my neighborhood. As I walk, I pray and talk with God. I tell Him everything I am thinking and what is on my heart. At these times the Lord usually reminds me of one of His names. Perhaps I tell Him that I am upset and confused because someone I prayed for didn't get healed. He settles my heart and reminds me that He is Jehovah Rapha, The Lord My Healer. Sometimes while praying I share how weak I am in a certain area, and then I declare, "Lord You are my... (righteousness, healer, provider, etc.—fill in the blank). Meditating on God Himself has been a large part of my prayer life.

5.MEDITATE ON THE WORKS OF GOD

“In the Old Testament the word *testimony* comes from the word, “do again.” The implication is that God wants to repeat His wonderful works when we speak of what He has done. In the New Testament we have a confirmation of that principle in Revelation 19:10 “...*the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.*”¹ This means that when we bring a testimony of the works of God to remembrance, we are actually prophesying that He can do it again now, because “*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever*” (Heb. 13:8).

Meditating on and remembering the works of God are major keys to seeing them repeated. King David understood this well. That is why when he was in a period of suffering he would meditate on God’s past works. This not only encouraged David, but it also prophesied into the atmosphere that God could do it again.

“And I said, “This is my anguish; but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High.” I will remember the works of the Lord; surely I will remember your wonders of old. I will also meditate on all your work, and talk of Your deeds” (Psalms 77:10-12).

“I remember the days of old; I meditate on all Your

works; I muse on the work of Your hands” (Psalms 143:5).

It is incredibly important to carry the works of God with you. Some of my favorite conversations are the ones where I can tell a new friend stories of when I have seen God at work. For example, when I recount to a new person my story of how a lemon-sized tumor disappeared under my hand as I prayed, the story reinvigorates my spirit with life. It stirs the Spirit of God within me. When I speak into the atmosphere of something God has done, the atmosphere becomes charged for God to do that same work again, and the faith level rises. Carrying the testimonies of what Jesus has done brings life to dead Christianity. I have found that non-Christians perk up and become interested when I tell the stories of what I have seen God do. Legalism and quoting Scripture without love has turned the world off toward us, but people listen eagerly if we are sharing the stories of the works of God.

THE IMAGINATION IS THE MEDITATION ORGAN OF YOUR SPIRIT

“I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which He has called you, the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints”(Ephesians 1:18).

If Paul is going to tell the Ephesians that he is praying for them, don't you think he would choose his words carefully? This shows the value that Paul put on receiving enlightenment for the spiritual eyes. The eyes of the heart refer to the human imagination. Clearly this was understood as important in the first century, whereas in the modern Church the imagination has been made a low priority and moved to the fringes of Christendom. In fact people commonly invalidate anything that comes from the imagination with statements like, “Oh that is *just* my imagination.” This is unfortunate and we need to stop stifling what God is trying to say to us through our imagination. Adam and Eve had an imagination before the fall of mankind. Therefore, the imagination is not inherently evil. Now that we are believers, we need to take back the realm of the imagination and stop invalidating everything that comes from it. Even Jesus validated the power of the human imagination.

You have heard that it was said, “Do not commit adultery. “But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart” (Matthew 5:27-28).

Jesus said that simply using the imagination is as valid as having done it in real life. Understand that if a person sins in the imagination realm, when they step back into the natural realm, they bring back with them the stain of the sin they just committed. The imagination realm releases actual realities in the physical. It is clear that Jesus is speaking of this in a negative context, but in general this validates the power and legitimacy of the imagination. When He says that adultery is committed in the heart, He is referring to the human imagination. This would be an example of using the imagination in meditation in the negative sense. Yet it validates the power and reality of the imagination.

The imagination is the creative organ of your spirit. For example, all inventions in the earth have come from someone's imagination. It has been said that “everything that now exists was once imagined.” Even when God determined to create the earth and each person on the earth, He would have imagined first what He was creating. God has quite an imagination!

If you are constantly invalidating your imagination while you are awake, then many times God will begin to open your spiritual

eyes while you are asleep and dreaming. When the senses of your physical body and soul are at rest, then God is able to bypass any resistance and speak directly to your spirit. *“For God may speak in one way or in another, yet man does not perceive it, in a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls upon men, while slumbering on their beds, then He opens the ears of men, and seals their instruction”* (Job 33:14-16 NKJV).

Another author made a great point about invalidating the imagination of children. “What child has not heard something in their room during the night? What youngster has not seen something in the closet? Desiring to comfort their children, but without an appreciation for spiritual encounters, parents inadvertently taught their children that their perceptions were irrational. They turned on the lights to “prove” that nothing was there, or opened the closet door and demonstrated that it was just their imagination.

This is often the beginning of our schooling in Western rationalism, which trains us to doubt our experiences, attributing them to the mere antics of a hyperactive imagination.

It is time to retrain ourselves in the innocent belief of early childhood. When young Samuel heard a voice calling his name in the Temple, Eli did not respond, “You’re just hearing things. Look, I will light this oil lamp and prove no one is there. Your imagination is getting the best of you!” Thankfully, Samuel did not

have to “undo” bad teaching based on Eli’s lack of understanding of the supernatural. This was a great advantage to him on his journey to becoming one of Israel’s great prophets² (see 1 Sam 3:1-10).

USE YOUR IMAGINATION

The imagination is similar to a television set; it is not essentially good or evil. As with a television, evil can be projected on the imagination, but this does not make the imagination evil. Conversely, Christian and educational programming can be projected on the television, but this doesn't make the television righteous. The television and the imagination are always just conduits.

The imagination is like the television screen, and there is the opportunity to project the things of the flesh or the things of the spirit upon it. The goal is to project on the imagination the righteous things of the spirit. This is done by biblical meditation.

God put an imagination inside every person; it is not a byproduct of the fall of Adam. Adam's imagination is evidenced by his naming all the animals before the fall into sin. We need to be careful that we don't invalidate the voice of our discernment if it comes by way of the imagination. God put your imagination in you, and He is trying to talk to you through it.

EXPERIENCE THE WORD

The goal of operating our imagination through biblical meditation is to enter into an interactive experience.

“For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12).

Consider carefully what this verse says. It makes an amazing statement that has far-reaching effects. If something is alive and active, then you can interact with it, and it will be responsive and communicate with you. If someone is dead, I can talk to him or her all day, but we won't experience each other. If he or she is alive, then we can talk to each other and interact. If I have a statue of a dog, then I do have a dog, but it is not living and active. This is similar to how many people approach the Word. In reality, the Word is like having a living puppy; it is alive and active, and when you draw near to God, He draws near to you (James 4:8). When I open the Word and am ready to experience it, the Word greets me like a puppy welcoming home his owner. This life and activity that the puppy exhibits gives us a picture of how the Word “jumps” on us and wants us to interact with it.

Jesus also stated that *“The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts*

for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life” (John 6:63). The Word is alive, and it dwells in the spirit because it is spirit. We cannot read the Word only with our fleshly mind; we must engage it in our spirit for it to be properly read. It must be meditated on in our spirit and our imagination.

In John 17:17, Jesus prayed for His disciples: “*Sanctify them by the truth; Your word is truth.*” An interesting insight about this verse is that the root word for “truth” can also mean “reality” (Greek: *aletheia*). *Vine’s Expository Dictionary* definition of *truth* is “the reality lying at the basis of an appearance; the manifested, veritable, essence of a matter.”³ (I will go into this more in the [next chapter](#).)

Therefore, the Word of God has a reality or realm inside it, and we can enter into the reality of each verse. The Word was given to us so that we can enter into this reality regularly. The Word and the Holy Spirit are our guides in this realm; Jesus said that the Holy Spirit will guide you into all truth.

So, the Holy Spirit is our guide in the reality or realm of the Word. There are countless testimonies of Christians who have had prophetic experiences where they entered into one of these realms of the Word. These should encourage and inspire us to enter in and experience the realities of the Word for ourselves.

HEAVENLY ROOMS

If you are still wondering how you can enter into the realms of the Word, let me share a personal example. I was attending a conference in November 2005, in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. A friend of mine laid his hand on my chest in prayer, and I had a very powerful reaction. In the physical, it felt like a fire had entered into my chest—it hurt so much I was almost scared. I slumped forward onto the floor, and I entered into a prophetic experience. I came back to my physical awareness two hours later. During this experience, the Lord showed me four different rooms in Heaven.

The first room looked like a warehouse with shelves full of body parts. I sensed that these could be used for people who need physical healing. I believe that when we pray, God already has the parts ready, and somehow He just deposits these into people, and they get healed.

The second room was full of diamonds. When I picked one up and looked closely, I could see the face of a person in each one. I understand this to be the way that Jesus sees each of us. As I turned the diamond in my hand, I could see through it in a new way and see different facets of the person's character. You are literally one of God's gems; He treasures you like a diamond.

The third room was full of paper money of all colors, shapes,

and sizes. I sensed that I was looking at a representation of all the types of money in the earth. The Lord was showing me His finance chamber; this was a prophetic vision of “His riches in glory” (Phil. 4:19 NKJV). As He showed me this, He gave me peace that He has all the provision and can always take care of me; this strengthened my faith greatly.

The last room was warm and moist; it seemed round, like being inside a ball. The walls were pink and somewhat flesh-colored. I saw Jesus standing next to me, and I asked Him what this room was. He replied, “This is the reality of Colossians 3:3.” I heard the verse resounding in my spirit, “*For you died, and*

your life is now hidden with Christ in God” (Col. 3:3). I realized that in the vision I was inside the heart of God the Father, hidden with Christ. I was actually standing inside the heart of God.

This is one example of how we can enter into the realms of the Word. But this is only one verse. I believe that every verse has a prophetic potential, that all of the Word is living and active and ready to engage us, that all of God’s Word is truth and has a realm that we can enter into. Now Colossians 3:3 will always have a personal meaning to me because I have experienced it.

IS THE IMAGINATION DANGEROUS?

When we are pursuing the Lord in the person of Jesus Christ, we have no reason to be afraid. Jesus said,

Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him! (Luke 11:11-13).

Yes, it is true that there are scorpions and snakes in the world of the evil imagination. But when we are pursuing God in the Word through the imagination, it would be an insult to the nature of God to be afraid that you are going to receive something dangerous. God is big enough to protect us, and we need not fear. This fear of the imagination stems from a weak view of God and an inaccurate view of the strength of the devil. God wants us to enter in, and He will protect us when we do.

ACTIVATION

Use your imagination to engage in meditating on each of the five categories of biblical meditation. I encourage you to activate your spirit and engage in the Word every time you read the Bible; make this a regular practice.

1. Good Things

2. The Word of God (Good visionary passages to start with include the following: Isa. 6; Rev. 1; 4; 22; Ezek. 37; 47; Dan. 10.)

3. Prophetic Words

4. The Lord Himself

5. The Works of God

ENDNOTES

1. Bill Johnson, *Dreaming With God* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image, 2006), 83.
2. Lucas Sherraden, *When Heaven Opens, Discovering the Power of Divine Encounters* (Stafford, TX: Lucas Sherraden Ministries, 2006).
3. W. E. Vine and F. F. Bruce, *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1981), 159.

CHAPTER 14

WORSHIP IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH

I WAS WITH 5,000 home group leaders at a church in Manaus, Brazil. The presence of God was incredibly tangible during worship. Then Gary Oates got up to speak, and the presence of the Lord overwhelmed him and knocked him to the floor on the platform. Randy Clark turned to Gary's wife, Kathi, and told her to take over the service. As she took the microphone, she began to prophesy over the nation of Brazil, and a powerful wind began to blow through the church.

Gary Oates described the wind in his own words:

Inside, the wind was whipping around just like on the day of Pentecost—a mighty rushing wind had come into the house.¹

It blew the potted plants on the stage wildly and even blew open two large arched doors on the stage. While this was happening, I stepped outside the church to see if there was any natural explanation for the wind. Outside, it was eerily calm and

peaceful, no wind and no movement. What was happening inside the church was clearly supernatural; the wind was so powerful that it actually blew over a section of 400 empty chairs. Randy got up and called for the ministry team to pray for the sick while the wind continued.

Team members would later talk of strong winds blowing in a circular motion around them as they ministered. Reports would also come back that virtually everyone prayed over that day was instantly healed.²

The deaf, in particular, seemed to receive healing. This wind lasted for approximately two hours while we continued to pray for the sick.

I believe that exceptionally strong worship was a major key in the manifest presence that came down that day. They had a high level of breakthrough in the realm of worship. There is more in New Testament worship than much of the Church has realized. Jesus brought an incredible shift in worship in the New Testament.

LOCATION IS THE KEY TO WORSHIP

In John 4 we find Jesus sitting at a well talking with a Samaritan woman. Jesus, as always, is not concerned with the cultural taboos that He is violating. Interacting with a Samaritan was a disgrace, and to be interacting with a woman was a double strike. Jesus proceeds to engage her in a discussion about worship. She then brings up a culturally controversial question. Where is the proper place to worship—where the Jews worship or where the Samaritans worship?

“Sir,” the woman said, “I can see that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem” (John 4:19-20).

Jesus, always being one step ahead, gives her a totally unexpected answer. He tells her of a whole new location for proper worship. He says that the place of the Jew’s worship and the place of the Samaritan’s worship are both being voided, and a new place is being set up.

Jesus declared, “Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews.

Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit and His worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.” (John 4:21-24).

This woman’s question concerns the location of our worship. Jesus says that the previous locations of worship, whether on this mountain or in Jerusalem, were no longer going to be used. Then He speaks of a new location of worship that was coming in the future. Worship must take place in spirit and in truth. Because God is a spirit, our worship must be in the spirit realm.

We need to recognize the strong imperative of this statement: *“Those who worship Him **must...**”* Our worship is missing a fundamental element unless we gain insight into what the verse is telling us we must do. Take a moment and consider how you have understood this passage in the past or how you have heard it taught. Most people have never been trained to look closely to find out how to properly worship God as a spirit, and yet the key lies right under our nose.

IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH

The word *spirit* in John 4:24 could refer to the human spirit, the Holy Spirit, or the spirit realm. In Greek there is one word for spirit (*pneuma*), and it can be difficult to determine which meaning of *spirit* is being conveyed. To determine the meaning of the word *spirit*, we must always look at the context. The best way to do that would be to understand what the word *truth* means.

The prolific author and teacher Watchman Nee gives the following insight into John 4:

What then is spiritual reality? The Lord said that “God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truthfulness” (John 4:24). The word truthfulness can be translated as reality. As mentioned in the [previous chapter](#), *Vine’s Expository Dictionary* defines truth [Greek: *aletheia*] as “the reality lying at the basis of an appearance; the manifested, veritable, essence of a matter.”³ The Lord also said, “But *when He, the Spirit of reality, comes, He will guide you into all the reality*” (16:13). First John 5:6 says, “*The Spirit is He who testifies, because the Spirit is the reality.*” This shows us that God is Spirit, and everything related to God has to be in spirit. The Spirit of truth is the Spirit of reality. Hence, spiritual reality must be in the Holy Spirit.

Spiritual reality is something that transcends people and

things. Only that which is in the Holy Spirit is spiritual reality. All spiritual things are sustained in the Holy Spirit. Once a spiritual thing moves away from the Holy Spirit, it becomes letter and form, and it is dead. All spiritual things must be in the Holy Spirit before they can be real, living, and organic. The Holy Spirit leads us into all reality. Hence, any experience that we can acquire without the guidance of the Holy Spirit is surely not spiritual reality. Anything that we acquire through our ears, our mind, or our emotion alone is not spiritual reality. Only the things that the Holy Spirit guides us into are spiritual reality.⁴

We do not worship God merely in the physical realm; we are to touch and tap into the spiritual reality. It is the spiritual reality of Jesus that brings life, not just the physical knowledge. Everything in the Kingdom of God is about entering into spiritual reality. It is the Spirit that brings life, and we are ministers of the Spirit.

“...God, who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life” (2 Corinthians 3:5-6 NKJV).

The Book of Revelation shows us that John practiced this new worship in his personal life: *“I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day...”* (Rev. 1:10). At this point, he was exiled on the island of Patmos without a church or fellowship to support him, but he still

entered into the Spirit in worship. We can see from his example that we can enter into the spirit realm and worship anytime and anyplace

THE TENT OF DAVID

One of the most incredible corporate worship events in the Old Testament occurred under the leadership of three seers—Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun. These were the same three seers who led the constant worship in David’s Tabernacle for 40 years. They also each wrote psalms, which are contained in our modern Bibles (for more information, review [Chapter 5](#), “Prophets and Seers”). At the dedication of the Temple of Solomon, as the people praised the Lord in unison, the glory of God came down as a cloud:

“...the house of the Lord, was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord filled the house of God” (2 Chronicles 5:13b-14 NKJV).

The focus of our attention is on the three seers who were leading when this occurred. God so enjoyed the worship that these three men created in the Tabernacle and in the dedication service that He released His manifested presence. The Lord so loved the worship in the Tabernacle of David that it is the only Old Testament model for worship that is carried over into the New Testament.

All the animal sacrifice and all of the Old Testament altars are left behind in the New Testament in favor of what the Book of

Hebrews calls a better covenant (see Heb. 8:6-13). The only exception is an obscure prophecy in Amos that says that God will raise up David's tent again:

“In that day I will restore David's fallen tent. I will repair its broken places, restore its ruins, and build it as it used to be” (Amos 9:11).

Hundreds of years later, the day finally came where the New Testament declares that God has reestablished David's tent. Peter stood before the Gentiles in Cornelius's house and, in essence, told them that God had set up a place of worship that is accessible by all people, at all times.

The words of the prophets are in agreement with this, as it is written: *“After this I will return and rebuild David's fallen tent. Its ruins I will rebuild, and I will restore it, that the remnant of men may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who bear My name, says the Lord, who does these things”* that have been known for ages” (Acts 15:15-18).

One part of this restoration, which is commonly overlooked, is the restoration of seers in the worship realm. God desires to restore the constant interactive worship of David's tent. Seers need to be restored to the Body of Christ for Davidic worship to be fully restored. Prepare to hear more about worship leaders writing

songs from Heaven, seeing angels during worship, and being directed by the presence of the Lord. This restoration is on the move.

ACTIVATION

Set aside this book and put on your favorite worship music. Close your eyes and engage in worship. As you do, ask the Lord to show you what is happening in the spirit realm around you. Perhaps there are spiritual beings or objects in the room with you. The next step is to ask the Lord if you should do something to engage in the spiritual experience of worship. Perhaps if you see water in the room in the spirit, the Lord might direct you to kneel down in the water and be refreshed. Step out in faith and do what the Lord directs. You can enter into an interactive experience in worship whenever you want, by faith.

ENDNOTES

1. Gary Oates, *Open my Eyes, Lord* (Dallas, GA: Open Heaven Publications, 2004), 100.
2. Ibid.
3. W. E. Vine and F. F. Bruce, *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1981), 159.
4. Watchman Nee, *The Holy Spirit and Reality* (Anaheim, CA: Living Stream Ministry, 2001), 7-8.

CHAPTER 15

ENTRUSTED WITH SECRETS

I HAVE WONDERFUL NEWS! The Lord has secrets, and He wants to entrust them to His people! He even limits His movements and activities until He has someone to share with what He is about to do. The prophet Amos said it this way: *“Surely the Lord God does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets”* (Amos 3:7 NKJV).

A clear example of God revealing His secret before He would move is found in the story of Sodom and Gomorrah. The Lord spoke first to His servant Abraham about what He was going to do, and it gave Abraham the opportunity to intercede on behalf of the two cities: *“Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?”* (Gen. 18:17). He desires to share with us His secrets and hear our input. There were also times that God shared His secret plan to annihilate disobedient Israel, and Moses asked God not to destroy them (Exodus 32).

When we begin to move into seeing and the prophetic, the Lord at times will begin to reveal more of His secrets to us. Remember, God does nothing unless He reveals His secret to His

servants the prophets. Note that this refers specifically to His servants the prophets, not His servants the priests or His servants the kings. Those who are leaning into God to hear His voice and see into the spirit are the ones to whom He will entrust secrets.

We are under the New Covenant, where Jesus said that all of His sheep can hear His voice (see John 10:27). I am not saying that only prophets can hear the Lord and receive secrets. But the Lord takes notice of those whom He can trust with His Word. The apostle Paul goes so far as to define our identity in this way:

*“...men ought to regard us as **servants of Christ** and as **those entrusted with the secret things of God**” (1 Cor. 4:1).*

EXAMPLES OF THE LORD HAVING SECRETS

“The secret of the Lord is with those who fear Him, and He will show them His covenant” (Psalms 25:14 NKJV).

*“You have heard; see all this. And will you not declare it? I have made you hear new things from this time, **even hidden things**, and you did not know them” (Isaiah 48:6).*

*“At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that **You have hidden these things** from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight” (Matthew 11:25-26).*

*“Behold, the former things have come to pass, and new things I declare; **before they spring forth I tell you of them**” (Isaiah 42:9 NKJV).*

“But as it is written: ‘Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.’ But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God” (1 Corinthians 2:9-10 NKJV).

“The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law” (Deuteronomy 29:29).

*“It is the glory of God to **conceal a matter**, but the glory of kings is to search out a matter” (Proverbs 25:2 NKJV).*

PROPER STEWARDSHIP

The secrets that the Lord shows to us each carry a weight of responsibility. Bill Johnson says, “By keeping revelation from those without hunger, God actually protects them from certain failure to carry the responsibility it would lay on them. And so He conceals.”¹ Be careful what you ask for, because you have a responsibility for the revelations that the Lord shows you.

For example, when Saul had a powerful revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus, it became his responsibility to properly carry that revelation. The greater the revelation, the heavier the responsibility we have. Be careful what level of revelation you ask for, because you will be held accountable for it: *“From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked”* (Luke 12:48b).

Later, in a similar manner Jesus said, “Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much” (Luke 16:10).

Jesus also said, *“Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them*

under their feet, and then turn and tear you to pieces”
(Matthew 7:6).

If Jesus shares a secret with you, it should be treated as a pearl. Be a good steward of what He reveals. There are some people who, through ignorance or close-mindedness, would not receive our sharing the secrets of God with them as a good thing. They would trample what we have shared under their feet and then turn and tear us to pieces. Jesus is warning us to use wisdom and discernment about with whom to share secrets.

Ecclesiastes 3:7 tells us that there is *“a time to be silent and a time to speak.”* Not every secret that the Lord shows us is intended to remain a secret forever. Perhaps there is timing for when that revelation is to be released. Many people share what God has shown them too soon, and this cuts them off from deeper revelations because they cannot be trusted.

We need to be sure that it is okay to share our information before we get ahead of God. Ask Him if it is wise to share your revelation. If you feel any sense of hesitation in your spirit, hold back until you have a peace about sharing. This could save much criticism and broken trust from happening. There is a time to be silent and a time to speak, and some secrets are revealed over time. To reveal them early would be like having a premature baby, very dangerous and much more work than if time had been given for

maturation.

I've heard Larry Randolph say, "*The true test of a prophet is not what he knows, but what he dies knowing.*" There are revelations that God will entrust us with, and we will be tested on the basis of our faithfulness in keeping His secrets. Some of these things will be between us and Him for our entire life, and He will hold us accountable for these secrets. There are things that, out of relationship, I share only with my wife. These are things that only she will carry all of her life and a portion of her faithfulness can be proven by how she keeps these secrets. Our relationship to Jesus our bridegroom is similar.

JOSEPH

The story of Joseph is a familiar one for many. In Genesis 37, we learn that Joseph, as a young man, had two prophetic dreams from the Lord while he slept. He told his family of the dreams, and they were divided into two reactions. His father rebuked him for what was most likely arrogance, and his brothers hated him even more:

His brothers said to him, "Do you intend to reign over us? Will you actually rule us?" And they hated him all the more because of his dream and what he had said.... When he

*told his father as well as his brothers, his father rebuked him and said, "What is this dream you had? Will your mother and I and your brothers actually come and bow down to the ground before you?" **His brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the matter in mind*** (Genesis 37:8-11).

His brothers and dad responded very differently to the same revelation from God. Imagine if Joseph had not told his brothers, but had only told his father. His life may have been very different. The only difference in the story was the listener. Know your audience before you share your secrets.

Another principle from this story is that your spiritual father may be safer to share secret revelations with than those who are on your same level. Envy is often an issue between siblings (Jacob and Esau, David and his brothers, Rachel and Leah).

THE APOSTLE JOHN

Over the last 2,000 years, millions of people have read the Book of Revelation. In [chapter 10](#), only the apostle John was privy to hearing what the voice of the seven thunders spoke. Jesus trusted John with this revelation and told him not to write it down for us. This was a very intimate thing for the Lord to do for John. It was

private revelation meant only for John's ears.

“When he shouted, the voices of the seven thunders spoke. And when the seven thunders spoke, I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven say, ‘Seal up what the seven thunders have said and do not write it down’” (Revelation 10:3-4).

SAMSON'S HAIR

The Lord sent an angel to Samson's parents before he was born. He brought them a prophetic message about their coming child and told them that their son would be a Nazarite, which means that they were not to cut his hair, nor let him drink alcohol or touch a dead body. It is important to note that the angel never spoke of Samson's incredible strength, or the secret of his weakness. Samson's parents would be as surprised as anybody.

A certain man of Zorah, named Manoah, from the clan of the Danites, had a wife who was sterile and remained childless. The angel of the Lord appeared to her and said, “You are sterile and childless, but you are going to conceive and have a son. Now see to it that you drink no wine or other fermented drink and that you do not eat anything unclean,

because you will conceive and give birth to a son. No razor may be used on his head, because the boy is to be a Nazarite, set apart to God from birth, and he will begin the deliverance of Israel from the hands of the Philistines (Judges 13:2-5).

I believe that the secret of Samson's strength was a personal revelation to Samson from the Lord. At some point he came to understand the secret, keeping in mind that the angel never revealed the secret of Samson's strength. Samson's downfall would be the result of him sharing his personal revelation with Delilah:

*“So he told her everything. ‘No razor has ever been used on my head.’ he said, “because I have been a Nazarite set apart to God since birth. **If my head were shaved, my strength would leave me, and I would become as weak as any other man**” (Judges 16:17).*

I would conjecture that the power was not only in the hair on his head, but was also contained in his ability to steward the secret revelation from the Lord. When he shared the revelation, the ultimate result was that the secret was used against him.

Having put him to sleep on her lap, she called a man to shave off the seven braids of his hair, and so began to subdue him. And his strength left him (Judges 16:19).

If God entrusts private revelation to us, then we should be careful about being a good steward of His trust. If God can trust us, then He can give us power, but if we betray that trust, we “*become as weak as any other.*”

Not only did he become as weak as any other man, but the enemy took advantage of the situation, gouged out Samson’s eyes, and put him into laborious bondage. This is a prophetic image of what can happen to us spiritually when we fail to steward the secrets of the Lord correctly.

KING HEZEKIAH

King Hezekiah was extremely blessed in material goods from the Lord. He had riches, favor, silver, gold, spices, armor, gems, cattle, grain, and so on. One day, the rulers of Babylon sent out envoys to investigate what was taking place in Israel. The Word says that God left Hezekiah to test him and to know what was in his heart (see 2 Chron. 32:27-31).

*Hezekiah received the messengers and showed them **all that was in his storehouses**—the silver, the gold, the spices and the fine oil—his armory and everything found among his treasures. There was nothing in his palace or in all his kingdom that Hezekiah did not show them (2 Kings 20:13).*

King Hezekiah exercised no discretion in revealing the riches that God had given him. The handling of the riches was the test that the Lord used to prove his character. Hezekiah failed the test big time.

Then Isaiah the prophet went to King Hezekiah and asked, "What did those men say, and where did they come from?" "From a distant land," Hezekiah replied. "They came from Babylon." The prophet asked, "What did they see in your palace?" "They saw everything in my palace," Hezekiah said. "There is nothing among my treasures that I did not show them" (2 Kings 20:14-15).

As with Samson, Hezekiah received judgment for failing to steward properly. It is imperative that we learn to be good stewards who the Lord can trust. Tests will come; may we all pass through the fire unscathed.

Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the Lord: The time will surely come when everything in your palace, and all that your fathers have stored up until this day, will be carried off to Babylon. Nothing will be left, says the LORD. And some of your descendants, your own flesh and blood that will be born to you will be taken away, and they will become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon" (2 Kings

20:16-18; Isaiah 39:1-8).

SECRETS ARE A BLESSING

This chapter has had a lot of teaching about caution. I want to reemphasize that it is a blessing to receive the secrets of the Lord, and if we steward correctly, then we can enjoy the blessing without worry. Let us diligently pursue revelation from the Lord: *“But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that **He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him**”* (Heb. 11:6).

ACTIVATION

Jesus said that the Holy Spirit will tell us of things to come (see John 16:13). Ask the Lord to show you a secret about your future. Once He has shown you something, ask Him if you can share this, with whom, and when.

Write down today's date, the guidelines the Lord gave you, and when (or if) you can share the secret.

ENDNOTES

1. Bill Johnson, *Dreaming With God* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image, 2006), 60.

CHAPTER 16

FROM GLORY TO GLORY

MUCH HAS ALREADY BEEN SAID about how to press in by faith, walk in love, increase discernment, and so on. At this point, I want to end the book on this final note—continually push forward for more. Before you read this book, you had certain views, opinions, and understandings; hopefully, you have been stretched and challenged.

My goal has not been just to give you more information, but to create a hunger within you, to reawaken that desire to obtain more spiritual life in Jesus. We need to press in for progression, for growth, for more! I want to take this chapter to exhort you and remind you that it is the very nature of the Kingdom of God to progress. The Word says that we move:

From grace to grace (John 1:16)

Strength to strength (Ps. 84:7)

Faith to faith (Rom. 1:17)

Glory to glory (2 Cor. 3:18)

And grow brighter and brighter (Prov. 4:18)

In Ezekiel 47:1-5, Ezekiel had a prophetic experience with the river of God. He waded into the water and took four measurements. The first measurement had the water at ankle level, the second at the knees, the third up to the waist, and the final measurement had the water over his head. This is a clear picture of the nature of the Kingdom of God; we should be progressing until we are in way over our heads in the river of God.

One of the messianic prophecies over Jesus was, “*Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end...*” (Isa. 9:7). Jesus set in motion a Kingdom that is still progressing and being established more and more each day.

Jesus said it this way: “*The Kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard seed planted in a field. It is the smallest of all seeds, but it becomes the largest of garden plants; it grows into a tree, and birds come and make nests in its branches*” (see Matt. 13:31-32).

Jesus also used this illustration:

The Kingdom of Heaven is like the yeast a woman used in making bread. Even though she put only a little yeast in three measures of flour, it permeated every part of the dough (see Matt. 13: 33).

The Kingdom of God is never stagnant; it is always progressing forward and taking ground.

THE NATURE OF GOD'S RELATIONSHIP WITH US

Sometimes we in the Church have said that if God wants us to grow, then He will just do all the work. I hope that nobody consciously thinks this, but it is declared loud and clear by the actions and lifestyle of many. This lazy approach to the Christian walk is connected to an extremely inaccurate view of the sovereignty of God. We find a great example of God Himself correcting this view in the story of Moses.

*Moses answered the people, “Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. **The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still**” Then the Lord said to Moses, “Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to **move on**. Raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea to divide the water so that the Israelites can go through the sea on dry ground (Exodus 14:13-16).*

Our understanding of the sovereignty of God will determine

whether we continue to progress with God. He reigns over all, but He has given us authority that He wants us to operate in so we can move forward in our call and destiny. If we sit by and just say that God will handle everything, then we don't understand the nature of God's relationship with us, and we will not move forward with the Lord. The Word says that He has given us everything we need for life and godliness and that we are to walk out our salvation with fear and trembling. We need to hunger and thirst for righteousness, to press in for more, to pursue love and the spiritual gifts.

OLD TESTAMENT PRINCIPLES

Even before Jesus established the Kingdom of God on earth in the New Testament, He gave us a major clue in the Old Testament as to why the Kingdom would be progressive in nature:

I will send the hornet ahead of you to drive the Hivites, Canaanites and Hittites out of your way. But I will not drive them out in a single year, because the land would become desolate and the wild animals too numerous for you. Little by little I will drive them out before you, until you have increased enough to take possession of the land (Exodus 23:28-30).

God desires a systematic, progressive destruction of the enemy through us. He wants to walk with us while we take ground for Him in this world, inch by inch. The Lord even left certain enemies for His children to fight, so that His children would be grown and developed. This idea of God not doing all the work for us and actually wanting us to be involved may be difficult for some, so let's look deeper in the Word.

These are the nations that the Lord left in the land to test those Israelites who had not experienced the wars of Canaan (He did this only to teach warfare to the descendants of the Israelites who had not had previous battle experience)...They were left to test the Israelites to see whether they would obey

the Lord's commands, which He had given their forefathers through Moses (Judges 3:1-4).

There are many places in the Word where we find the Lord leaving difficult circumstances for His children to press through. This is not meant to discourage or defeat us; this is a setup for victory. You don't have a victory without a battle. Think about the battles of the Old Testament, such as Gideon and his 300 men defeating a vastly larger foe (see Judg. 7:1-25). If God hadn't left an enemy, then they would never have had such a testimony of victory. Again, after Joshua and the people marched around Jericho for seven days, the walls collapsed, and the Israelites had another testimony of victory (see Josh. 6:1-27). If God were to do all the work and destroy every enemy without our involvement, then what value would we place on that victory?

Before we were saved, we were hopeless and without any ability to defeat satan. Jesus had to pull us out completely of His own power and forgive us and then seat us in heavenly places with Him. But that is our history. We are now in the Kingdom, and our call is to work with Him to progress this Kingdom forward together. Do not ever stop pushing and claim that you have it all, because God always wants to give you more revelation, understanding, and victory.

SPIRITUAL WARFARE

Because I am a seer, people often ask me about spiritual warfare. My understanding of this topic revolves around three words, *identity*, *authority*, and *triumph*.

In the life of Jesus we observe a face to face encounter with satan himself. Most would agree that this is the highest level of spiritual warfare that any individual could ever encounter. If you look closely at the warfare plan of satan, he spent his time focusing on Jesus' identity. Satan says twice to Jesus, "*If you are the Son of God...*" (Matt. 4:3, 6) The battle revolved around Jesus being secure in His identity. This is also true of us as well. Much of the so-called "spiritual warfare" in the Church would be more healthy if the Church firmly grasped its identity in Christ.

AUTHORITY

The authority we have been given as believers is contained in our identity. The truth is that we have been put into Christ. *“In Him we live and move and have our being”* (Acts 17:28). *“We abide in Him and Him in us”* (John 15:4). *“We have been seated with Him in heavenly places”* (Eph. 2:6). *“Greater is He who is in me than he who is in the world”* (1 John 4:4). *We should experience the truth of being “more than conquerors”* (Romans 8:37). Christians should be able to truly declare I *“can do all things through Christ who gives me strength”* (Phil. 4:13). The Word tells us that we are one spirit with Him (1 Cor. 6:17). Therefore, the authority that we see in the life of Jesus is the authority that we have been given. He gave us the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven (Matt. 16:19).

There is no question about us having all authority so long as we comprehend our identity. If we understand that we abide in Christ, which also means that we abide in His authority, then our spiritual warfare is very different. We are not fighting for victory, we are fighting from victory. Jesus already fought and won the battle against satan, and then Jesus put us inside Himself so that we can walk in this same victory. If you are not living your life inside of Jesus, then you have not received eternal life; the only way that we have eternal life is by being *in* the Son.

And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life,

and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life (1 John 5:11-12).

TRIUMPH

It is important to grasp the difference between two specific words: *victory* and *triumph*. For example, at a soccer game when the end of the game comes, the team with the most goals wins and the winning team has achieved victory. Triumph is what takes place after victory has been achieved. Triumph is the celebration in the streets, the pubs, and the workplace. Triumph is the jumping up and down, the yelling and the obnoxious, grandiose boasting that occurs in the face of the losing opponent. We are not still fighting a battle against satan and we are not looking for victory; we are enforcing and reveling in the victory that is already ours; we are triumphing in our King Jesus. *“He always leads us in triumph in Christ Jesus...”* (2 Cor. 2:14).

We know that satan wants the Church to think that she is fighting him, because he does not want the Church to understand that he has been defeated. We are currently on earth as ambassadors (2 Cor. 5:20; Eph. 6:19, 20) enforcing and advancing the application of Jesus' victory.

Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives (Hebrews 2:14-

15).

*Then the end will come, when He hands over the kingdom to God the Father after He has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For **He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet.**The last enemy to be destroyed is death (1 Corinthians 15:24-26).*

*But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, He sat down at the right hand of God. **Since that time He waits for His enemies to be made His footstool,**because by one sacrifice He has made perfect forever those who are being made holy (Hebrews 10:12-14).*

These verses show that satan has been rendered powerless and that Jesus' Kingdom is advancing and placing all of satan's works under His feet. As the Book of Romans says, "*The God of peace will soon crush satan under your feet.*" (Rom. 16:20)—satan cannot even stand eye to eye to fight us because he is being put under Jesus' feet and under our feet.

The apostle Paul wrote much on the subject of spiritual warfare in the New Testament. Yet because of cultural differences, we have overlooked some of his best insights. For example, we miss a lot of the meaning in Colossians 2:15:

“And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.”

When Paul uses the word *disarmed* in this passage, he is making a first-century cultural metaphor. Paul is saying that Jesus totally stripped satan of all his power and authority. It was a term used for the disarming of a defeated foe. When a Roman general had a notable victory, he was allowed to march his victorious armies through the streets of Rome. Behind his chariot were chained all the kings and the leaders he had vanquished. They were stripped naked, chained, and pulled behind the conquering general through the streets. They were publicly humiliated and openly branded as his spoils.

Paul thinks of Jesus as a conqueror enjoying a kind of cosmic triumph. In Jesus’ triumphal procession are the powers of evil, beaten forever, for everyone to see and we have been put in Him, so we are in the chariot with Jesus, and satan is now naked and powerless. The answer to all questions about spiritual warfare comes back to this: Triumph is the foundation of my theology.

ACTIVATION

Make a plan for integrating godly habits for growth. Start with what you have learned here and then expand upon it. This is only the beginning.

Enter worship in Spirit and in Truth.

Regularly behold Jesus.

Pursue impartation.

Keep your spiritual eyes clean.

Write a letter to yourself from Jesus.

Acknowledge the love shed abroad in your heart.

Ask the Lord to share secrets with you.

PRACTICE THE FOUR KEYS:

1. Fasting and prayer
2. Praying in the Spirit
3. Hearing from God
4. Fellowshiping with people of faith

DECLARE TO THE LORD:

1. *Jesus, I will pursue you no matter what.*
2. *I will overcome offense and disappointment to follow You.*
3. *I will follow, full of faith.*

FIVE MEDITATIONS

1. Good Things
2. The Word of God
3. Prophetic Words
4. The Lord Himself
5. The Works of God

CONCLUSION

I RECENTLY WAS READING through a “spiritual gifts for dummies” type of book. As I looked at the table of contents, I noticed that there was a chapter listed for each of the nine gifts. Discerning of spirits and prophecy had been grouped together in one chapter. I flipped through the 20 pages of this combined chapter and found that the first 18 pages were about prophecy only, and the last 2 pages were about discerning of spirits. In this 165-page foundational book, there were only 2 pages on this neglected gift of the Spirit. Within the two pages there were at least five noncommittal statements about what this gift “might be,” “could possibly be,” or “perhaps could be.” The author wasn’t even sure what this gifting is.

Then I did a search online for discernment ministries. The top ten results on a Google search yielded the most anti-Holy Spirit, judgmental and harsh Web sites. Filled with hatred and bearing false witness, these sites offer a discernment that originates from the flesh and not the supernatural gift of the Holy Spirit. I say all this to reinforce that discerning of spirits desperately needs to be restored to the modern Church.

Of the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit, eight of the gifts have each gone through a process of being restored (Acts 3:21) into a

place of prominence in the Church. Let me explain.

The gifts of tongues and interpretation of tongues both went through a process of being restored to the Church starting in 1906 at the Azusa Street Revival. Since then, these two gifts have gained normalcy in many denominations. The gifts of healing and word of knowledge were restored to the Church through the 1948 Voice of Healing movement. After this, the gift of faith was brought back to the Church by such wonderful teachers as Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth Copeland, and the Word of Faith movement. The gifts of prophecy and word of wisdom were brought back by the ministry of Christian International, the Kansas City Prophets, and the Vineyard movement in the 1980s.

The only two gifts that have not yet been through a full restoration are the gift of miracles and the gift of discerning of spirits. I believe that the gift of miracles has started to be restored as of the mid-1990s. Consider the vast miracles that have happened under such ministers as Heidi Baker, David Hogan, Bill Johnson, Randy Clark, and many others. There have been thousands upon thousands of miraculous physical healings taking place around the world. Also, there have been hundreds of people raised from the dead in the last 15 years. I believe that we are currently experiencing the restoration of the gift of miracles to the Body of Christ. Consider the unexplainable manifestations of God's glory, such as gold dust, heavenly manna, heavenly gemstones, feathers falling in meetings, limbs growing out,

instantaneous weight-loss, and others.

FORERUNNERS

Every gift that has gone through restoration has had a group of people working to restore the gift. Whether prophets, apostles, healers, teachers, or evangelists, God always raises up forerunners before He initiates the restoration. Currently, He has set in the Church those with the spiritual gifting as seers to train others in the gift of discerning of spirits. In this next move of the Holy Spirit, because it is their primary gifting, God will be using seers to teach the rest of the Body of Christ how to operate in the gift of discerning of spirits. Prepare to hear more about seers in the years ahead.

WHY IS DISCERNMENT LAST?

I believe that the gift of discerning of spirits is purposefully the last gift on God's agenda for restoration to the Church. Let me lay a foundation for why I would make such a statement.

First, we know that we are looking forward to a day where the Church will come to the "*unity of the faith*" (Eph. 4:11-13). A day will come when the Church has risen in unity and glory to the full stature of Jesus Christ.

Second, Jesus prayed that we (the Church) would be one as He and the Father are one (see John 17:21). I believe Jesus' prayer will be answered. The Church will walk in the same unity that Jesus and the Father walked in.

Third, and most importantly, for true unity to be restored to the last day's Church, there has to be a restoration of the love of God in the Body of Christ.

These verses point to a day of unity and love in the Church like we have not yet seen. Remember that one definition I gave of discerning of spirits is, "Seeing the situations and people around you as if you were looking through the eyes of Jesus." We need to have this gift restored for us to see others properly through pure eyes of Jesus' love. True love among brothers must be restored before true unity will manifest. Not only do we need to have this

gift in place for that day to come, but it is also the last of the nine gifts that still needs restoration.

LOVE AND DISCERNMENT

As we learned in this book, discerning of spirits is always hand in hand with love. I believe that the restoration of discerning of spirits is the final bridge to the movement of love and unity in the Church.

And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment (Philippians 1:9 NKJV).

The revelation is this: “When the Body of Christ sees through the eyes of love (discernment), then we will be walking in true love and unity.” Love and discernment are irrevocably linked.

Here is the spiritual progression to be looking for in the next few decades:

1. Seers are being set in the Church by God.
2. Seers are going to teach and train the Church about discerning of spirits.
3. The Church will then begin to see each other through the eyes of Jesus.
4. This will bring about an unprecedented movement

of God-like love.

5. True God-like love will bring about a move of true God-like unity.
6. The “*unity of the faith*” (Eph 4:11-13) will be fulfilled, and “*we [the Church will] be one as He and the Father are one*” (John 17:21) will also be fulfilled.
7. This completes one of the final prophecies that must be fulfilled before Jesus can bring about the New Heaven and New Earth (see Rev. 22).

A WORD FROM THE LORD

I am going to conclude with a declaration I believe is from the Lord about the next move of the Holy Spirit:

The gift of discerning of spirits will be the next gifting restored to the Church. As the Lord's people see each other through the eyes of Jesus, a great unity will come forth. The breaking down of denominational divisions and walls will continue with great increase. Brothers and sisters throughout the Church will come together as one body like never before. Then the Lord's heart of love will be fully expressed through His Bride, His people, His Church.¹

ENDNOTES

- [1.](#) Jonathan Welton, October 20, 2008.

MINISTRY CONTACT INFORMATION:

The School of the Seers

Jonathan Welton

Office 717-712-5054

SchooloftheSeers@gmail.com

www.JonWelton.com

Additional copies of this book and other book titles from
Destiny Image are available at your local bookstore.

Call toll-free: 1-800-722-6774.

Send a request for a catalog to:



Destiny Image® Publishers, Inc.

P.O. Box 310

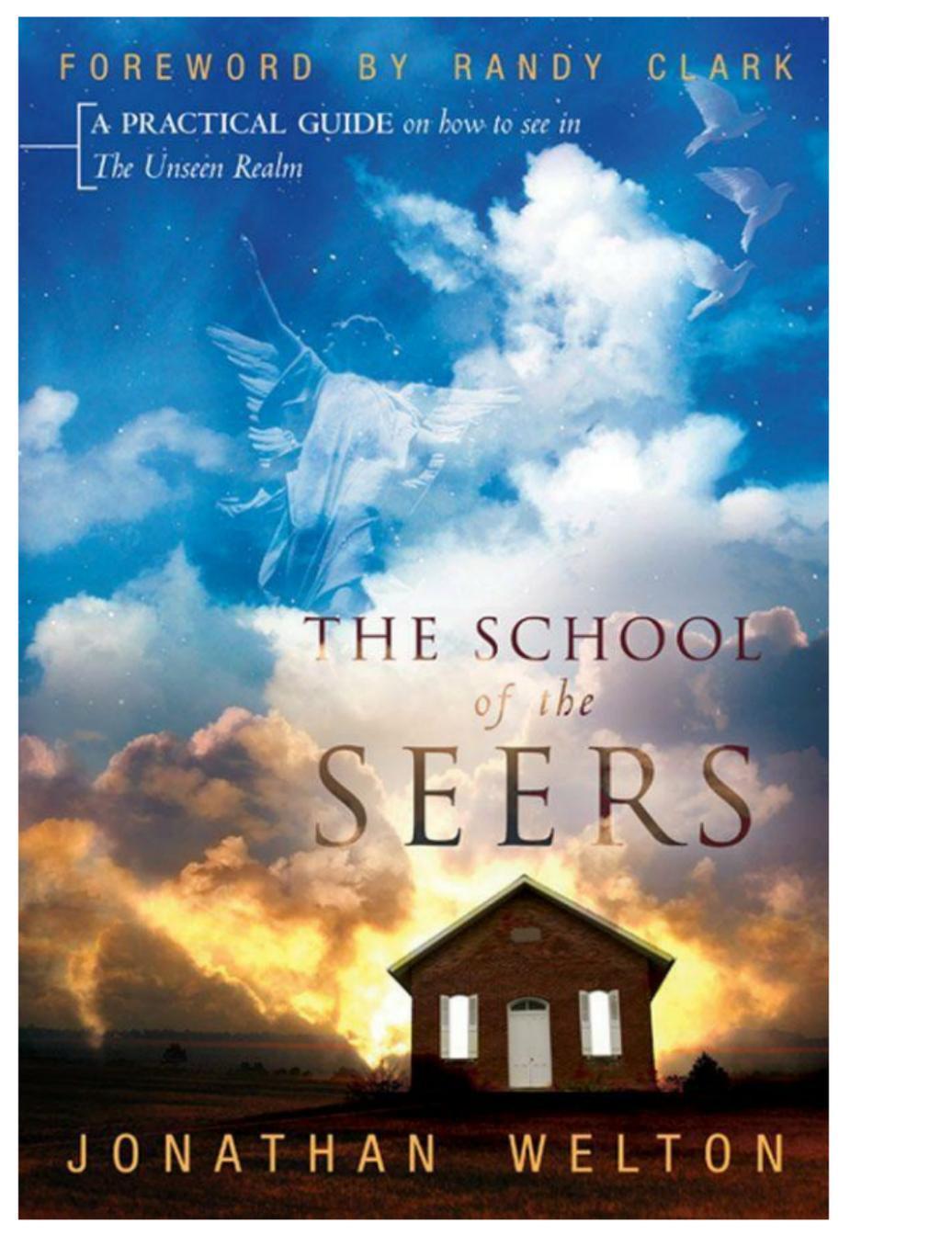
Shippensburg, PA 17257-0310

*“Speaking to the Purposes of God for This Generation and for
the Generations to Come.”*

**For a complete list of our titles,
visit us at www.destinyimage.com.**

FOREWORD BY RANDY CLARK

A PRACTICAL GUIDE *on how to see in*
The Unseen Realm



THE SCHOOL
of the
SEERS

JONATHAN WELTON